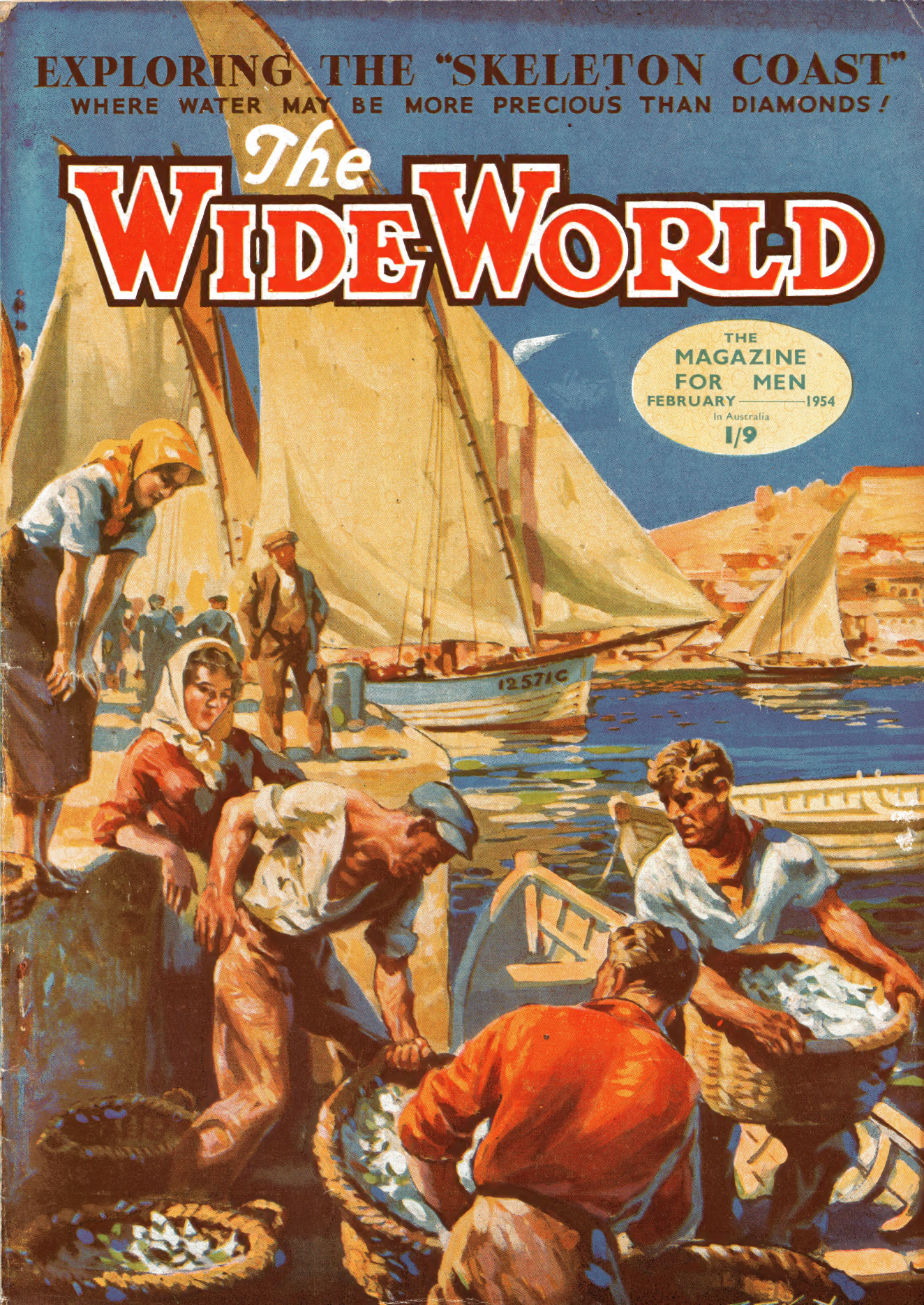


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THE
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FOR MEN
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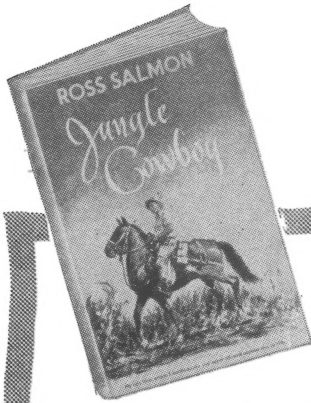
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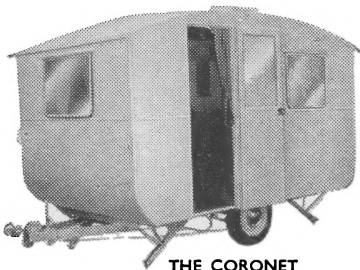
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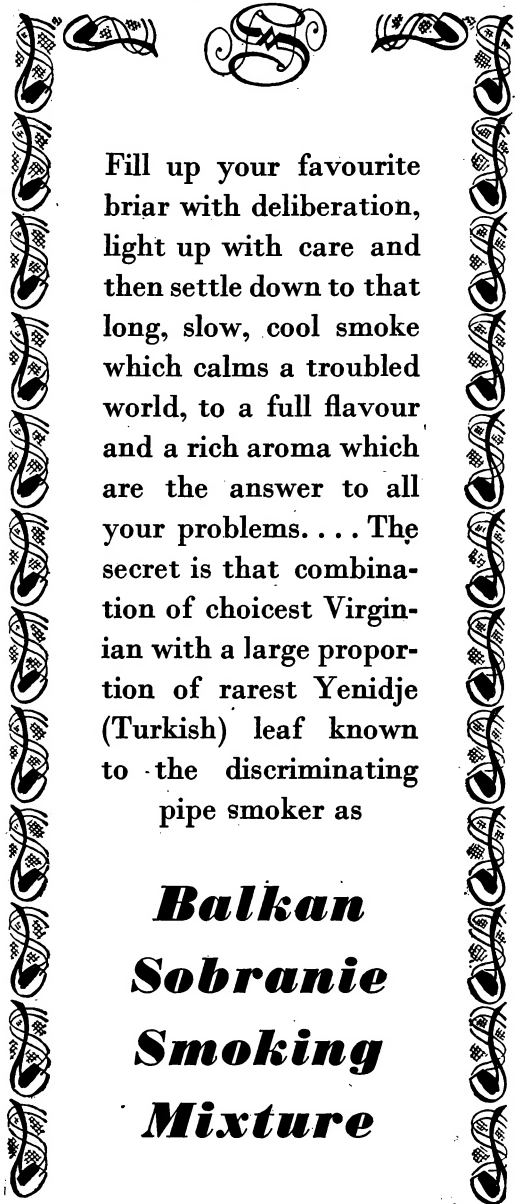


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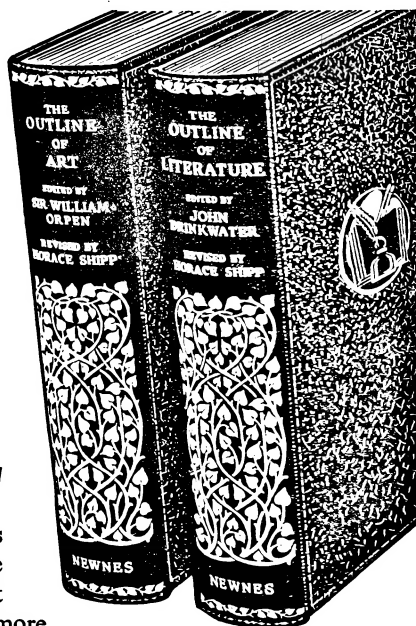
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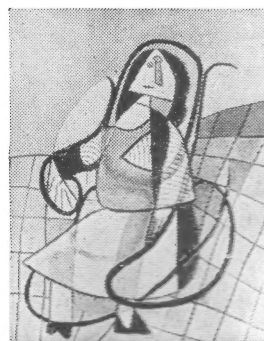
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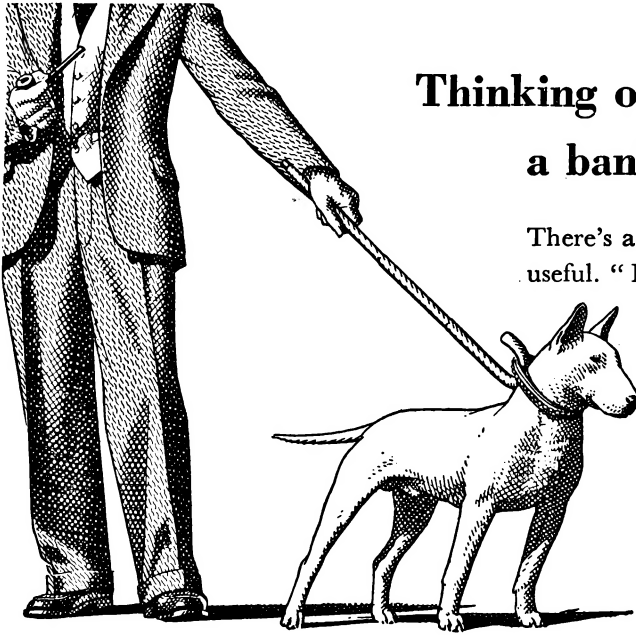


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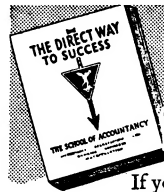
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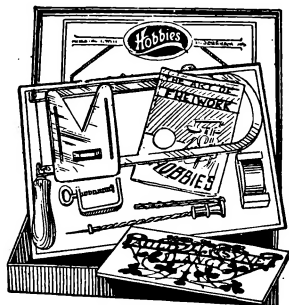
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"It was a truly beautiful tree."

CAPTAIN JAN'S CHRISTMAS-TREE

A delightful story told by the known British liner. He for obvious reasons all

By MORGAN CAMERON

former captain of a well-vouches for the facts, but names have been changed.



EARLY in the morning of December 24th, 19—, Capt. Jan Pietma, master of the twenty-thousand-ton Dutch liner *Netherlanda*, had many things on his mind, but at the moment the thought that was uppermost seemed almost as important as the safety of his fine ship.

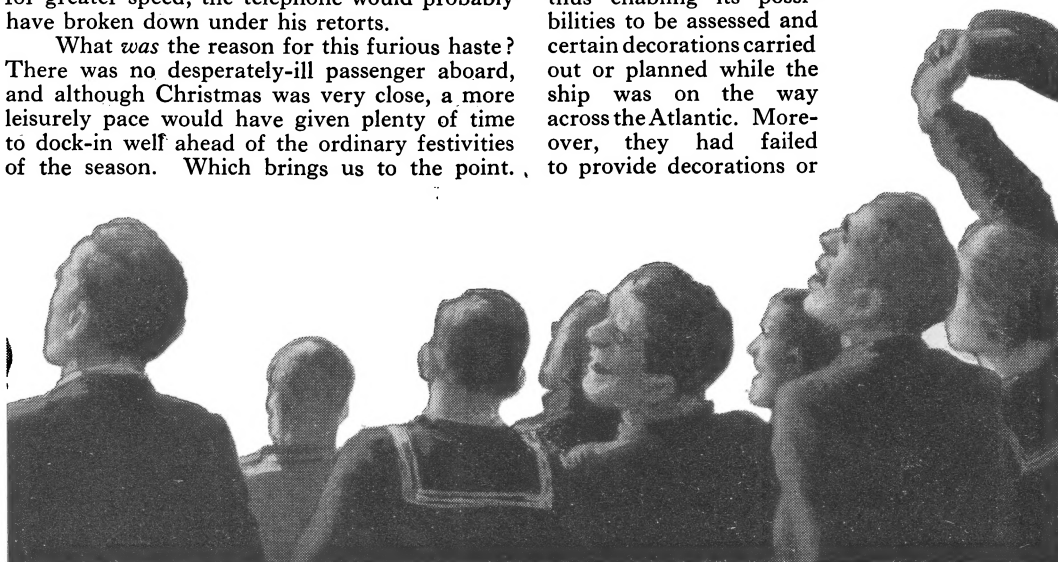
The *Netherlanda* was nearing New York, with Nantucket Light well behind, and the Captain was desperately anxious to be moored in at his berth. He had been forcing speed most of the way across the Atlantic, but during the past couple of hours his continual demands for more and more "revs," had been calculated to upset the mental stability of the Chief Engineer. The Captain's behaviour, indeed, filled the Chief with pent-up exasperation, but he only replied doggedly: "I'm giving you all I can. She's up to her limit." Had it not been that, knowing the underlying reason, he'd felt some sympathy with "Old Jan's" demands for greater speed, the telephone would probably have broken down under his retorts.

What *was* the reason for this furious haste? There was no desperately-ill passenger aboard, and although Christmas was very close, a more leisurely pace would have given plenty of time to dock-in well ahead of the ordinary festivities of the season. Which brings us to the point.

Captain Pietma was bent on indulging in festivities that he intended to be *extraordinary*!

At that period it was the pleasant custom of the New York Harbour Authority to award a prize of one thousand dollars every Christmas Eve to the ship that had the best Christmas tree set up on board and properly decorated by 5 p.m., at which time all lights were switched on and judging took place. For years "Old Jan" had longed to win this prize—not only for the honour of his ship and country, but because he himself loved Christmas and all that went with it. So far, however, he had never been able to achieve his ambition; the "Office" or the Agent hadn't been sufficiently helpful, or else he hadn't been in New York over the holiday. This year everything had at first seemed quite promising; but for a number of days now Jan's anxiety had been mounting.

Trouble began in Amsterdam, when he discovered that the Office had made no arrangements for him to take a tree on board there, thus enabling its possibilities to be assessed and certain decorations carried out or planned while the ship was on the way across the Atlantic. Moreover, they had failed to provide decorations or



anything that would be useful for improvisation. The Captain was furious; had he not reminded them at least half a dozen times? As his anger mounted, the people at the Office endeavoured to calm him down by promising to cable the New York Agent immediately with orders to have a special tree and appropriate decorations waiting at the docks, ready to be installed at the earliest possible moment that Jan could arrive.

The master's annoyance was only partly mollified, however, and instead of tendering the usual seasonal greetings as he left headquarters, he bluntly expressed the hope that, if his tree failed to come up to expectations, they would all choke over their Christmas dinners!

Bad luck dogged the *Netherlanda* on the run, for fog laid its restraining hand on her for some twelve hours, and only constant harrying of the overwrought engine-room staff had brought them in almost on time.

The recollection of all these matters still filled Captain Pietma's mind when the liner finally berthed. It was just on 8 a.m., and every member of the ship's company had already been warned there would be no shore-leave until after 5 p.m., as they would all need to work like galley-slaves if the Tree was to be ready in time. As an incentive and consolation, "Old Jan" promised that the prize, if they were lucky enough to win it, would be divided amongst the crew. This had a most heartening effect upon the men, who really loved Old Jan despite his odd foibles and occasional violent language—perhaps even *because* of them!

The first half-hour after berthing-in was fully occupied by the usual filling-in of papers and other routine matters—all rushed through at top speed. Then Jan laid down his pen and looked up at the Agent, "Where iss my tree?" he demanded, abruptly. "Iss it all ready?"

"Your tree, Captain?" echoed the Agent, blankly. "What tree?"

"My Christmas tree, you fool!" stormed Old Jan. "The tree the idiots in Amsterdam forgot—the tree they cabled *you* to get. Where iss it?"

The official's face lighted up. "Oh yes, Captain!" he replied. "I received the cable—but it came too late. With the Christmas rush on I could do nothing in these last few days."

As this news slowly sank in, Captain Pietma's rugged countenance positively began to glow with the fierce red flame of his anger, which finally erupted over the defaulting Agent. It was well for the latter that Old Jan's sense of urgency was so great; after a volcanic outburst lasting several minutes he strode off to make his own investigations.

CAPTAIN JAN GETS BUSY

Now it so happened that my ship was berthed not far from *Netherlanda*. Jan had already spotted her, and since we'd always been good friends it occurred to him to come over and unburden himself to me. He felt he needed sympathy!

I was on the promenade deck when he hove into view, and one glance at his familiar figure made it abundantly clear that something was gravely amiss. His usual jaunty step was lacking; instead, he appeared to be trampling snakes under his feet and grinding them in the dust, while at closer range the frown on his brow spoke volumes. Forthwith I hailed him and invited him aboard, meeting him at the gangway head. After the usual greetings, I led the way down to my quarters.

Jan sank heavily into a chair. "My goot friendt," he began, "I vant to speak vith you most seriously and get your help. I of imbeciles the victim am!"

"Glad to be of any assistance I can," I told him. "What do you want, Jan?"

"Vell, I cannot tell you all until I haf been reinforced by a goot trink, Captain. *Ja*, a goot trink!"

Realizing the urgency of the situation, I soon placed before him a selection of beverages accredited with the power to cheer. Then, amid occasional splutters of indignation, Jan related his tale of woe, the greatest scorn being bestowed equally upon the "Offiss" people in Amsterdam and the staff of the New York Agent. He summed them all up as incompetent fools.

I duly sympathized with him, agreeing that office people ashore were the bane of every master mariner's life, but I added my doubts as to whether I could give him much help in the matter.

"Ah, but you *can*, my goot friendt!" he assured me, earnestly. "Listen! You can help me because your goot ship vill never take the prize anyway, for you British do not love Christmas like the Dutch or the Chermans or the Scandinavians. You vill not spend the money to make a tree vorthy of the spirit of happy Christmas."

It hadn't appeared to me that Jan had been revealing much of this "happy Christmas spirit" towards the office-wallahs he'd just been cursing so roundly, and I said so.

Captain Pietma shook his head. "Ah, my goot friendt, again you are wrong! I haf inside me" (here he beat on his chest) "a goot and noble purpose. I shall teach them a lesson! I am going to *get* a tree. Do you hear, my friendt? *I am going to get a tree!*"

"But how can you do that, Jan?" I asked, in astonishment. "Here we are, past 9 o'clock in the morning, on Christmas Eve, with all work soon closing down or already closed. It can't be done, Jan!"

"No? Vell, it's *going* to be done!" retorted Jan.

"But *how*? Are you going to hire a gang to hold up the Central Park staff while you chop down a tree and rush it away?"

Jan looked shocked at my levity.

"My friendt," he said, severely, "I do not vant to class you vith the Offiss staffs! Still, I forgiff you, for you do not yet know my plan. No; I do it by all fair means possible—and only foul if I haf to! Listen! Didn't you tell me

once that you knew some of the people in the Forestry Offiss?"

I nodded.

"Vell, I ask you to come vith me now to see them, and when I tell them about these fools and imbeciles, they vill gif me a tree! Vill you come?"

Although I had little hope of success I readily consented, sensing some excitement and probably a bit of fun. It would certainly be interesting to see to what lengths Old Jan would go in order to fulfil his ambition.

"Goot!" said Jan, smiling happily. "You vait here. I go to get taxi for us." With that he hurried ashore.

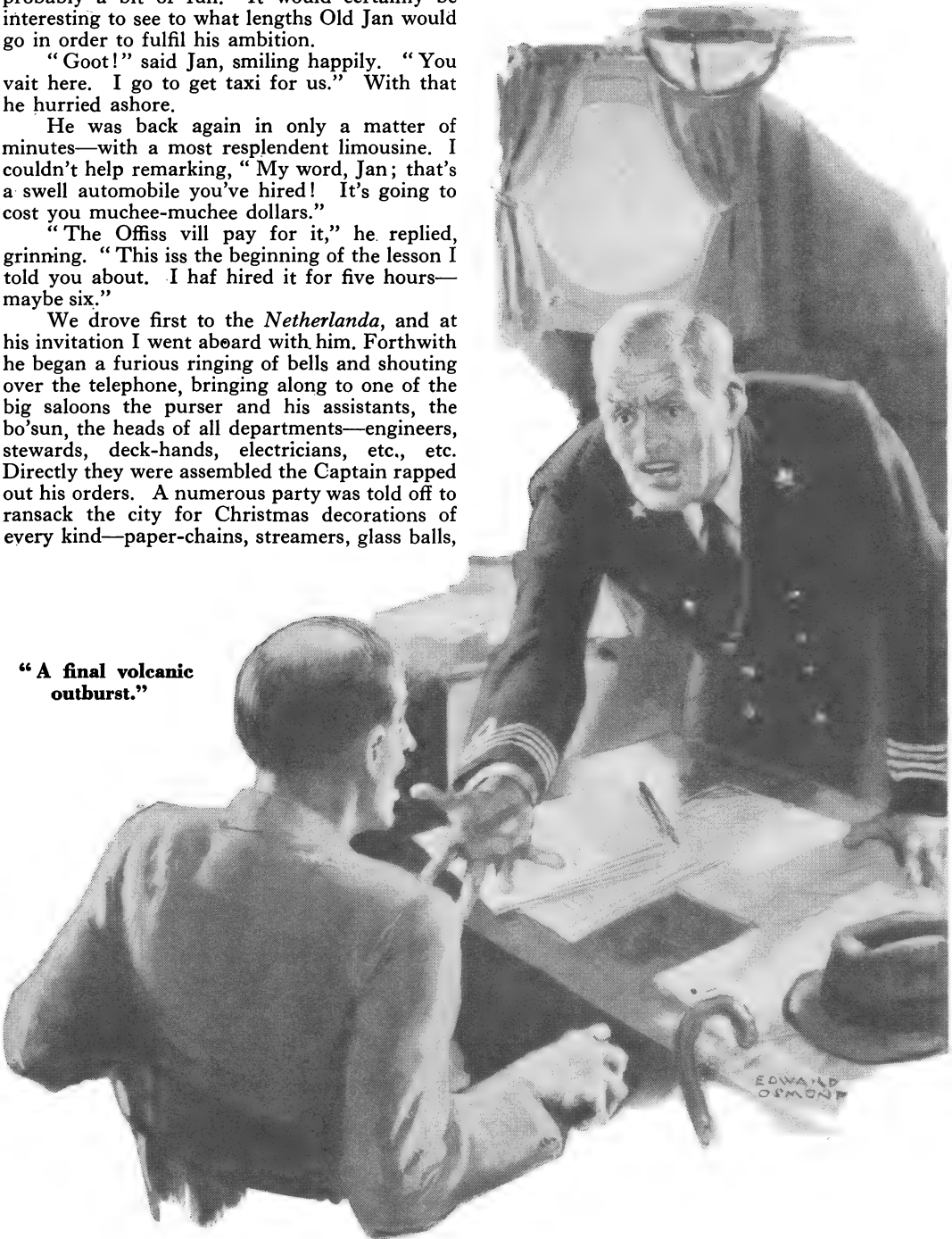
He was back again in only a matter of minutes—with a most resplendent limousine. I couldn't help remarking, "My word, Jan; that's a swell automobile you've hired! It's going to cost you muchee-muchee dollars."

"The Offiss vill pay for it," he replied, grinning. "This iss the beginning of the lesson I told you about. I haf hired it for five hours—maybe six."

We drove first to the *Netherlanda*, and at his invitation I went aboard with him. Forthwith he began a furious ringing of bells and shouting over the telephone, bringing along to one of the big saloons the purser and his assistants, the bo'sun, the heads of all departments—engineers, stewards, deck-hands, electricians, etc., etc. Directly they were assembled the Captain rapped out his orders. A numerous party was told off to ransack the city for Christmas decorations of every kind—paper-chains, streamers, glass balls,

and electric globes of every colour. No likely emporium was to be missed, from the largest to the smallest. Meanwhile, the clerical staff began a feverish making-out of official orders for goods—all to be charged against the New York "Offiss"—and the purser handed out a large number of dollar bills of goodly denominations to help ease matters where necessary.

"A final volcanic outburst."



ANOTHER SHOCK FOR THE AGENT

This part of the preparations having been set in motion, Jan indicated that our next move was a dash to the Agent's "Offiss." This gentleman had been gradually recovering from the Captain's verbal onslaught of an hour earlier, but experienced an immediate relapse upon sighting him again so speedily. He was in no condition to expostulate when Jan announced his intention of ordering anything and everything he needed for Christmas and charging to the "Offiss." At that moment, indeed, the poor fellow seemed willing even to agree to his own execution—if this marine firebrand would only go away!

Our next call was on the Forestry people—where, by great good luck, we found several of the men I knew best. Jan quickly explained the situation to a most sympathetic audience, but it was undoubtedly his own almost childlike enthusiasm and sincerity that really carried the day. They willingly agreed to sell him a tree—there was a fine wood about a dozen miles out where he could take his choice—but the snag was labour, both to fell the tree and transport it to the ship, for most of their men were already on holiday. They could, however, supply a long tree-trailer and tractor, and thought they could find a driver. If the Captain could get, say, forty of his crew along, and the sailors wouldn't mind helping—?

"They *vill*; I'll see to that!" declared Jan, triumphantly.

Thereupon our good friends put through a few hasty 'phone calls. The first secured the tractor, tree-trailer, and a driver, while another, to a local bus firm, succeeded in engaging a vehicle to proceed to the ship to collect the men. Jan and I dashed off in the limousine in order to get there first.

Back at the ship there was no lack of volunteers for the tree-felling job; sailorlike, the men regarded it as a sort of picnic. The kitchen staff were somewhat depressed at having to be left behind, but nobly fell to work preparing mountainous piles of sandwiches to sustain the seamen while away, and consoled themselves by planning a suitable repast with which to greet the rest of the crew upon their return from their various missions.

Having left the men to follow in the bus, the Captain and I went back in the limousine to the Forestry Office, where a senior official had volunteered to accompany us to the wood and smooth out any difficulties we might encounter. Arrived at the plantation, we found plenty of the good will and helpfulness characteristic of the American people. It was evident, however, that the Head Forester was decidedly shaken when Jan, ignoring the more orthodox trees brought to his notice, selected as his choice a huge spruce about sixty feet high! But he soon wore down the startled opposition, and the tree undoubtedly had one great advantage, being in an easy position for felling.

A few minutes later the bus arrived with its load of over fifty sailors—all in the highest spirits—who quickly demonstrated the well-known adaptability of men of the sea. Under the Head Forester's directions they seemed to become trained lumber-jacks within a matter of minutes, and in less than half an hour the tree was lying exactly where its fall had been planned. Then came the job of getting it on to the trailer, but this was just child's play to these cheery lads. Old Jan wanted his tree, and he was going to get it! So, amid tremendous cheers, the big spruce was presently safely cradled on the trailer.

Once it was there the problem represented by its gigantic size seemed to occur to all of us at the same moment. How on earth was it to be got through the crowded streets of New



York, full of all the extra traffic of Christmas Eve?

But our Forestry Office friends, well aware of the difficulties, must have been thinking ahead, for there suddenly appeared a double patrol of police on their motor-cycles, in charge of another old acquaintance of mine, Lieut. O'Hara—as Irish as they make 'em! The story was hurriedly unfolded to him, and at the end I had a chance to whisper that Old Jan was a Catholic like himself, and anxious to give Christmas its proper due. That clinched matters!

"It's meself that'll see ye get through," declared O'Hara. "By the saints, we will!" Having instructed the tractor-driver as to the best route to take, the Lieutenant dispatched two of his men to race ahead and arrange for traffic to be held up directly the tree reached certain points. "Stop it all, me bhoys, and clear the way as if it was for St. Patrick himself!" was his final shout.

We were now ready to move off, but the sailors begged to be allowed to ride on the tree rather than return by bus. Jan and the Forestry Official agreed, amid cheers, since they would come in useful to hold down the spreading branches.

We formed a decidedly imposing procession. Lieut. O'Hara led the way, with two policemen; immediately behind came the tractor, with



"Our tree swept several of them into their trench."

trailer and tree, and—disposed among the branches like monkeys—over fifty stalwart sons of the Netherlands. There followed the splendid limousine, containing our friend the senior Forestry Official, Jan, and myself; four more police motor-cyclists ranged alongside, while the rear was brought up by the empty bus. Its driver had turned down a suggestion that he should get away ahead, for, being another Irishman, he wanted to see the fun. He was grinning all over his face—especially after receiving Jan's tip. Captain Pietma, in fact, had been handing out largesse all round on such a scale that, if it constituted part of his lesson to the "Offiss," I

reckoned it was going to be a mighty expensive one for them!

What he'd tipped the tractor-driver and police-escort could only be imagined, but our procession set off at the top speed of which the tractor was capable. I found it comforting to remember that the crew on the tree had been well instructed in the use of the trailer handbrakes, so that, if occasion arose, these could be applied with full vigour of brawny muscles.

A TRIUMPHAL PROGRESS

It must have been about 12.30 when we reached the main part of the city. The streets were absolutely packed, and my heart sank. But Lieut. O'Hara had the situation well in hand, and showered invectives on all whom he deemed to be slow of movement or of intellect. The New Yorkers began to enjoy this free show, and crowds followed in our wake to observe our progress through the

streets. At one point we had a spot of bother; some workmen, digging a trench in the road, stubbornly refused to stand far enough back from it. As our tree brushed past, it swept several of them into their trench, shovels and all, to the huge delight of the onlookers.

Things were worst down at the water-front, where the traffic was particularly dense, but again Lieut. O'Hara proved equal to every emergency, and truculent lorry-drivers, wilting under his flow of language, drew meekly in to the roadsides, leaving sufficient passage-way for us to get through. And so, at last, we all arrived safely at the *Netherlanda*.

Now began the real work on the tree, under Old Jan's constant supervision. The members of the shopping expedition had returned from the city, and an examination of their booty proved that the various stores had been well and truly ransacked. It was now 1.30 p.m., but Jan announced that lunch couldn't be thought of while there still remained the tremendous task of decorating that colossal tree before 5 p.m. I found myself caught up in the general feeling of excitement on board, but Jan hustled me off into the limousine again (after its return from taking the Forestry Official home at "Offiss" expense) and we dashed away for a quick view of all the other ships, "To see vot they are doing, so that ve can do better," as Jan expressed it. He was something of an artist in his own way, and made quick notes of the details he liked best.

By the time we returned to the *Netherlanda* the derricks had been made ready for lifting the tree into position on the forward deck, and the crew seemed bursting with energy to get on with the job. There was no doubt their hearts were in it, but during Jan's absence they had received even more fortifying stimulus, for the chef and kitchen staff, ably coached by Emil, the grizzled old bo'sun, had rushed through a hasty "snack" for lunch—only about five courses—and the whole crew, together with the police, the tractor-driver, and the bus-driver, had managed to dispose of the feast in record time.

Miracles seemed to follow, for under Jan's direction that tree was standing in place, well braced, and with its base secured, within half an hour. At this juncture a steward ventured to inform Old Jan that lunch was ready for us, but the Captain, believing the crew were still fasting, felt he must suffer with them. He insisted, however, that I should go down. I greatly enjoyed that leisurely lunch, meanwhile listening to the steward's story of the crew's "quick snack," which took him quite a long time to describe in detail.

Eventually feeling much fortified, I rejoined Jan, passing through the big lounge where some of the crew were busily cutting out in gold paper the letters forming the word *Netherlanda* and joining them together. Having thanked Jan for the excellent lunch, I was at last permitted to return to my own ship—but not on my feet. Jan waved a lordly hand, and the limousine drove up. When I protested he told me blandly: "I hire it for six hours. The Offiss pay for it. I teach them!"

Back on my own ship, it was quite obvious that Jan's prediction would prove correct; although ours was quite a nice tree, it would stand no chance against his for the prize. Even before I had left the *Netherlanda* various professional experts had begun work on the decorations, lured to the ship by the tempting offers made by the morning's shopping-force.

THE TREE

I busied myself with various neglected Christmas duties, but just before 5 p.m. word

was brought down that Jan's limousine again awaited me, and I returned in luxury to the *Netherlanda*. Jan greeted me with overflowing exuberance. "Ah, my goot friendt," he cried, "Now you vill see the most beautiful Christmas tree in the world!"

My first glance at that wonderful effort almost awed me—it seemed something far more impressive than just a big Christmas-tree; there was inspiration behind it!

The judges' verdict was announced at 6 o'clock, the prize being inevitably awarded to *Netherlanda*, and for once all the other ships acclaimed the decision. It was a truly beautiful tree. Myriads of electric lights on the branches and right down to the base glowed with every colour of the rainbow. The name of the ship was displayed in four panels of gold lettering, facing in each direction, while on the topmost point there shone a huge Star of Bethlehem. Coloured balls swinging gently in the breeze, reflected the brighter lights of the lamps; flood-lighting, cleverly concealed, bathed the whole structure in a soft, silvery radiance, like moonlight. I have never seen anything so magnificent.

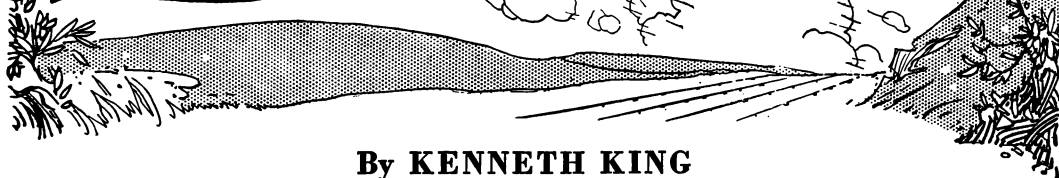
We stood in silence while, from a German liner lying nearby, there came the strains of "Holy Night," sung with all the impassioned tenderness of that musical nation. As the singing ended, the orchestra of *Netherlanda* began to play that gem from *Maritana*, "The Mansions of the Blest." When it finished, I turned to shake Old Jan's hand. He returned the pressure with more than his usual heartiness; then, still holding my hand, he gazed up at the stars, so bright in the frosty air, and murmured, "Goot friendt, 'The Mansions of the Blest'—*She* is there, looking down, and *she* is happy, too!"

For a moment I failed to grasp his meaning; then, while he still remained silent, my eye caught sight of two large gold letters near the base of the tree—an "L" and a "J," linked together by a golden heart. In a flash I remembered that, five years previously, Jan had lost his wife, Lena, sweetheart of his boyhood.

Suddenly he turned and grasped my other hand, saying in his usual cheerful voice: "And there is another thing that vill make her happy. The crew, they vill not take the prize money for themselves; they haf already decided. They go now down to the Bowery and the Bronx and into the poor homes. There they vill give money to the mothers and the babies and the old people. But they vill tell the children to be ready to-morrow, when the buses come to bring them to the ship for a big party we haf planned. The Christmas-tree vill not be complete until the children come. Some of the men are ashore already, buying the presents and the cakes and the sweets, and arranging for the buses. The Offiss vill pay for all that! Those fools vill not again forget my Christmas-tree!"

I am quite certain they didn't!

"LONE WOLF"



By KENNETH KING

THE crack night express from San Francisco to Los Angeles had crossed the long grade over the dreary reaches of Tehachapi Pass and was clicking merrily down into the Mojave Desert. Nothing unusual had happened, and now the train was slowing to its last stop for water before travelling on to Los Angeles. It was half-past two in the morning when it slid smoothly to a halt. The postal clerk in the forward mail-car had just about finished his sorting. The striped grey sacks which carried the registered mail held letters containing more than a hundred thousand dollars (£33,000) in cheques, cash, and postal orders.

The door of the mail-car stood open, for the night was warm in the Californian desert, and the weary clerk, stretching his arms to flex the muscles, was suddenly startled to hear a sharp, soft command coming from the direction of the opening behind him.

"Stick 'em up—
and keep 'em up!"

The clerk whirled round to see a man, medium-sized, strongly built and broad-chested, with a thin, determined face shadowed by a black soft hat. The intruder was holding a levelled snub-nosed revolver, and looked exactly the kind of person who would not hesitate to pull the trigger. The clerk

The "Lone Wolf" was Roy Gardner, a remarkable American criminal who has been described as the last of the Western "bad men." Specializing in daring mail-robberies, invariably carried out single-handed, he achieved nation-wide notoriety by a series of spectacular escapes from prison. Although his raids netted him several hundred thousand dollars, Gardner died miserably by his own hand, with only a few shillings in his pockets, demonstrating once again that "crime doesn't pay."

"Kneel down!" he commanded, curtly. The postal man complied, and in two minutes he was trussed up and helpless, with a gag in his mouth. Then, swiftly and coolly, the bandit seized the bags of registered mail. The train started at that moment, but as it gathered speed, the robber, completely unruffled, tossed the bags out of the door and finally dropped off himself. The whole operation had taken less than ten minutes.

By the time the postal clerk had worked himself loose from his bonds and started a hue and cry, the mysterious thief had vanished as though into thin air, taking with him the precious contents of the mail-sacks.

The identity of the perpetrator of this daring raid was no mystery to next morning's newspapers, which bore great black headlines—"ROY GARDNER STRIKES AGAIN"—and went on to detail the latest crime of this most spectacular of modern Western "bad men." For here was one more of a long series of startling exploits by this extraordinary bandit—Roy Gardner, hold-up man, train-robber, and escapolo-



Roy Gardner wearing the "plug" hat regarded as his trade-mark.

gist *par excellence*. His latest raid was all the more audacious because, at that moment, he was being hunted by the police of three States—not to mention the Federal authorities—because he had recently escaped from the officers who were escorting him to durance vile in the Federal penitentiary at McNeil's Island, Washington, after conviction on another charge of mail-robbery.

A STRANGE CHARACTER

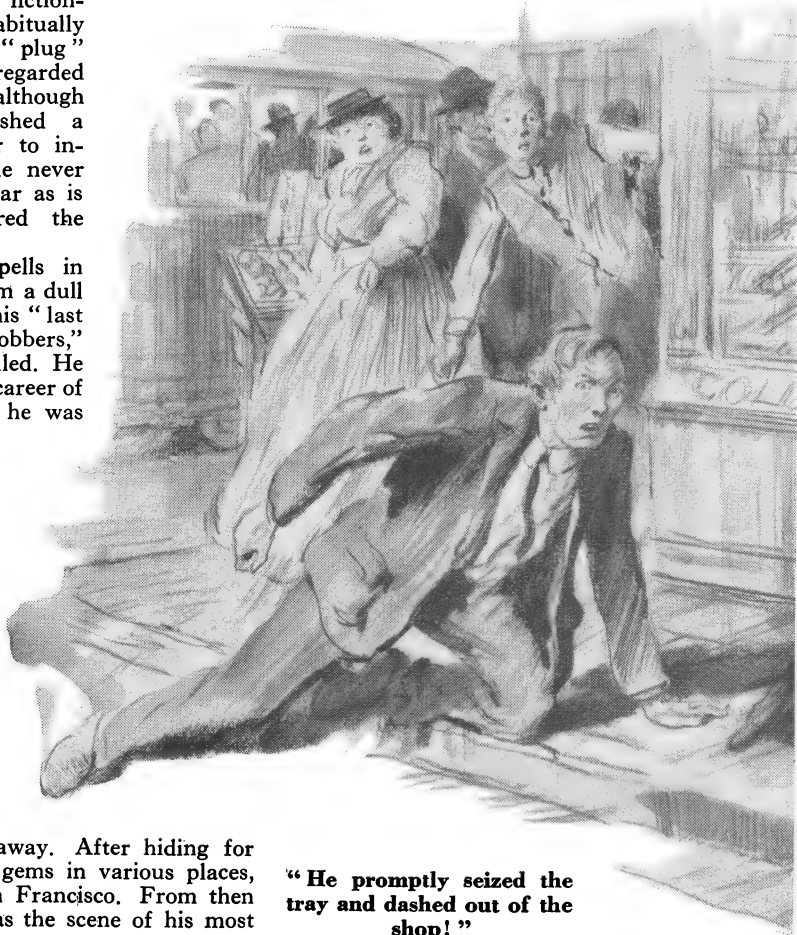
The entire career of Roy Gardner marks him as one of the most colourful—and enigmatic—of latter-day “bad men.” Making his spectacular coups, in the 'twenties and early 'thirties, when organized gangsterism was at its height in America, Roy Gardner was *not* a member of a gang, but earned his notoriety as a “lone wolf” of crime. Indeed, except in cases where other prisoners joined him in escapes, he invariably avoided accomplices, never associated with gangsters, and carried out all his “jobs” strictly on his own. A remarkable feature of his operations was the fact that he never made any attempt at disguise—no masks, handkerchiefs, false beards, or any of the other devices so beloved by fiction-writers. Indeed, he habitually wore the same black “plug” hat, which came to be regarded as his trade-mark. And although he frequently brandished a wicked-looking revolver to intimidate his victims, he never shot anybody nor, so far as is known, ever even fired the weapon.

Except for his spells in prison, there was seldom a dull moment in the life of this “last of the Western train-robbers,” as Gardner has been called. He started out early on his career of crime; as a mere boy he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in the reformatory at Booneville, Missouri, the State in which he was born, on a charge of burglary. After release, he drifted westward. Arrived in Denver, Colorado, he walked into a jewellery shop and asked to look at some rings. Shown a collection, he boldly seized the whole tray, dashed out of the shop, eluded his pursuers, and made a clean getaway. After hiding for awhile, he pawned the gems in various places, and finally reached San Francisco. From then on the Pacific Coast was the scene of his most notorious exploits.

Gardner started off in his new location in a modest way, joining the United States Army

and falling into the habit of gambling on pay-day. On one occasion he was caught cheating and, realizing that henceforth he would be a marked man, he deserted. Proceeding to Mexico—then in the throes of one of its many revolutions—he worked for awhile in the mines. Accused of turning a dishonest penny by smuggling arms to the revolutionists, he was sentenced to be shot by a firing-squad. This looked like an untimely end to a promising criminal career, but Roy Gardner soon showed the Mexicans his mettle. The night before his execution he feigned sickness, overpowered the sentry, made his escape from the other guards, and worked his way back to the United States.

He first broke into the newspaper headlines with a daring robbery perpetrated at Glindemann's jewellery store, on Market Street, San Francisco. At the height of the Christmas shopping season, Gardner coolly entered the shop and asked to see some diamond rings. Mr. Glindemann showed him the rings, but after looking them over Gardner said he could not make up his mind, but would return in a day or



“He promptly seized the tray and dashed out of the shop!”

two. He came back at a particularly busy moment on December 22nd. When the salesman placed a tray containing twenty-three diamond rings before him, the bandit snatched it up, dashed out of the door, turned into the adjoining shop, ran right through it to another street, then west to Powell Street, where he had the misfortune to run into the arms of Policeman Fella, and was promptly arrested. When sentencing Gardner to five years in San Quentin Prison, Judge Lawlor observed that the robber had shown "great boldness and some ingenuity," adding that there was evidence of "extensive deliberation." These elements continued to characterize the amazing exploits of Roy Gardner; his crimes were all carefully planned and executed with the utmost audacity, combined with split-second timing.

A SPELL OF HONESTY

The convicted robber entered San Quentin Prison on February 16th, 1911, and during his sojourn there he gave no trouble whatever, adjusting

himself to the routine and occupying himself with studying electricity. Earning a parole in 1913, he worked first in a copper mine and then in the shipyards at Richmond, California, where he made considerable progress towards becoming an honest citizen, working off his surplus energy and gaining opportunities for attracting the attention he obviously craved by making short speeches to assist the sale of War Bonds to the shipyard workers during the first World War. So long as hostilities continued Gardner found a law-abiding life interesting and satisfying, but directly the war was over he wearied of his humdrum existence. Starting out once more on a career of wrong-doing, he soon got his name on the front pages of the newspapers as a "one-man crime-wave." On April 28th, 1920, he was arrested for the hold-up of a mail-messenger in San Diego, California. Observing the messenger in the post-office, registering a shipment of \$75,000 (£25,000) in cash and securities, he climbed aboard the rear of a lorry as it left the post-office, held up the driver, and made his escape with the precious mail-sack. But luck was against Gardner on this occasion. He was observed burying his loot, arrested, tried, and sentenced to serve twenty-five years in the Federal penitentiary at McNeil's Island. This

may seem a stiff sentence, but tampering with the mails is one of the most serious offences in the U.S. calendar.

On June 7th, 1920, two United States marshals took Gardner aboard a train with a court order to deliver him to the Warden at McNeil's Island. As the train approached Portland, Oregon, Gardner — who had been quite docile up to this time — suddenly caught the marshal on duty off guard, grabbed his gun, took his keys, and compelled another prisoner to unlock his leg-irons and handcuffs. Then he calmly manacled both marshals to the steam-pipes with their own handcuffs, put out the lights, stepped off the train



when it reached Portland, and vanished into the darkness! Flitting like a wraith through Oregon, he went northward into Canada and eastward as far as Iowa, later doubling back to the Pacific Coast, where he worked at odd jobs without attracting notice. If he had been content to remain honest he might have kept out of sight indefinitely—but that was not Roy Gardner's way! Before long he held up another postal clerk in Roseville, California, getting away with a registered sack full of currency. It was at this time that he perpetrated the daring robbery of the San Francisco-Los Angeles express described at the beginning of this article. Caught while "sitting-in" at a poker game in Roseville, he was brought to trial, pleaded guilty, and received another twenty-five years' sentence to be served at McNeil's Island.

This time the United States marshal charged with his transport to jail determined to take no chances; he chose two experienced deputies and gave them detailed instructions concerning their elusive prisoner. These officers searched Gardner, handcuffed him, and also fitted him with an "Oregon boot"—a steel device weighing twenty pounds. When attached to the prisoner's leg this does not hurt him, but makes it decidedly difficult for him to move about. Observing every precaution they could think of, they watched him narrowly on the train and got as far as Portland without any trouble arising. Shortly after leaving Portland, Gardner asked permission to wash his hands. Bending over the basin, he pulled out a revolver which had been strapped to his body under his

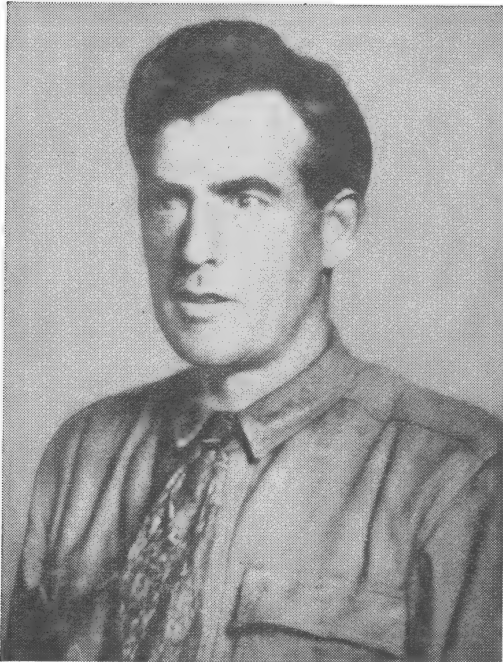
shirt, whirled round, covered the amazed deputies, and gave the curt command: "Stick 'em up!" Then he directed the other prisoner who was with him to slide down from the upper berth where he was lying, take the officers' keys, and unlock the "Oregon boot." After handcuffing the deputies, the two prisoners took their money! When the train slowed at Castle Rock, Washington, they switched off the lights and jumped out into the darkness. The other man was recaptured almost immediately—but not Gardner! He remained at liberty for a few days, but was finally arrested and—at long last—delivered to McNeil's Island. There Gardner brazenly told the Warden that he did not intend to remain very long! The prison-officers, remembering that he had twice escaped *en route*, kept a close watch on him, but in spite of his declaration he settled down quietly and gave no trouble whatever.

ANOTHER ESCAPE!

The first Monday in September—Labour Day—is a public holiday, and on that particular day, September 5th, 1921, the prisoners had a welcome respite from their dreary routine and were allowed to enjoy the privilege of watching a game of baseball. Gardner, like all the rest, seemed to be engrossed in the excitement of the contest. But his mind was evidently elsewhere, for just at the most thrilling moment of the game he and two other prisoners made a desperate dash from the field. The armed guards in the watchtowers promptly opened fire, and Gardner's two companions were laid low, but he got through the fence unharmed, eluded his pursuers, slipped into the water, swam to the mainland, and vanished!

This bold prison-break left the prison officials momentarily stunned, but they speedily took action, and the entire police machinery of the Coast was put into action to recapture the bandit. Newspapers gave front-page headlines to this latest feat of the colourful Gardner, and presently something most sensational occurred; even as a fugitive the man showed his thirst for publicity. Extraordinary to relate, he began sending letters to a journalist on the staff of the *San Francisco Bulletin*, and these were published as "Gardner's Own Story" of the spectacular escape! The letters were posted at widely-separated places whose names were not divulged by the newspaper. They revealed the almost-unparalleled effrontery of the man, showing that he took pride in his self-elected rôle as a "lone wolf" of crime and gloried in outwitting the forces of law and order. Here, it seems, is the key to this strange man's character and outlook.

For several months Gardner remained at liberty, although the hunt continued with unabated energy. Then, on November 15th, he once more figured in the headlines. Making one of his spectacular appearances in a mail-car at Phoenix, Arizona, intending to rob it, he received a nasty shock when the postal clerk, Herman Underlied, refused to be intimidated by the gun



Roy Gardner at the time he was committed to McNeil's Island Federal Penitentiary.

he brandished. Instead of raising his hands as ordered, Underlied made a flying Rugby tackle, floored the bandit, and held him down until help arrived. Many years later, in describing the incident, Gardner stated: "I entered a mail-car at Phoenix, Arizona, with intention to rob. The mail-clerk refused to submit and, although unarmed, he attacked me. I was forced either to surrender to him or shoot him. I surrendered. That mail-clerk was 100 per cent man, and I was a cheap crook. The result was inevitable."

Tried and convicted, Gardner was sent to the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. Previously he had been a model prisoner, but now he consistently made trouble. He refused to work, declaring that he had suffered an injury to his skull; a bone pressing upon his brain was the cause of his criminal conduct! X-ray photographs did not reveal any such injury, and the prison doctor refused to accede to Gardner's demands for an operation. The bandit, greatly incensed, first threatened the surgeon, and then obtained further publicity by going on a hunger-strike. He stirred up so much trouble that a great deal of his time was spent in solitary confinement, and ultimately he was transferred to the Federal prison at Atlanta, Georgia.

Here he continued his battle against authority and, shortly after his arrival, dug a tunnel under the wall, but was caught. Undismayed by this failure, on July 19th, 1928, he and four other inmates attempted another daring escape. Having improvised a ladder, they somehow got hold of two automatic pistols, with which they threatened the lives of the Captain and two guards. Finding it impossible to scale the wall, they threw away the ladder and compelled the Captain at pistol-point to pass them through the side entrance of the main corridor. There, however, they found the door locked, and backed by armed guards. Realizing they were trapped, the five men then surrendered.

Once more Gardner was put into solitary

confinement, where he started a hunger-strike and talked about suicide. The prison authorities suspected he was endeavouring to get himself transferred to a mental institution, where he might have more chance of escape, but after some consideration they sent him to St. Eliza-



"Instead of raising his hands he made a flying Rugby tackle."

beth's Hospital in Washington, D.C., for examination and treatment by psychiatrists. Expert observation failed to show any evidence of insanity, although it did establish the bizarre personality of the man and his almost-morbid craving for publicity. He showed contempt for the other convicts, and did not shape well at any organized activity, yet when allowed to work by himself revealed a surprising amount of initiative and intelligence, being rated as skilful and industrious.

On January 8th, 1930, he was sent back to Leavenworth Annex Penitentiary. At first he "cut up rough" again, but later he apparently took stock of his position and decided that bad behaviour merely lengthened his term of im-

prisonment. He then went to work in the shops, where he showed considerable ability.

THE ISLAND PRISON

In 1934 the United States Government took over Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay—hitherto used as a military prison—and remodelled it as an “escape-proof” penitentiary for hardened offenders whose bad conduct in other Federal institutions warranted their detention under especially strict conditions. Unlike the other jails, there were no radios on “The Rock,” no special privileges for “big shots,” and a minimum of opportunity for any help in escaping by gangster associates outside.

To this grim prison were sent such notorious underworld characters as George “Machine Gun” Kelly; Harvey Bailey; Arthur “Doc” Barker and Alvin “Creepy” Karpis, the kid-nappers; Basil “The Owl” Banghart; Albert L. Bates; and Ludwig “Dutch” Schmidt, bank robbers. These were all gangsters, working in highly-organized units comparable to a military machine, with scouts, “trigger-men,” transport operatives, and women auxiliaries—the traditional “gangsters’ molls.” Here, also, came the most noted of all America’s “public enemies,” Al Capone, who was of quite a different species. He represented the big business of crime, running a huge illicit beer and liquor business, employing hundreds of men, whose profits under Prohibition amounted to millions. And here, eventually, came the man who was the antithesis of all these gangsters—the “lone wolf,” Roy Gardner.

On September 4th, 1934, a weary, unshaven man of powerful build trudged down the gang-plank of a barge on to the island dock and climbed the hill to the cell-building. When his turn came he stepped up to the desk of Warden James A. Johnston and was given his prison number—“110.” It was Roy Gardner, train-robber and “bad man.” He was fifty years of age, with a criminal record going back to 1902. The Warden examined his dossier, with its long list of convictions and mutinous conduct in prisons. Here, the Warden realized, was potential dynamite, yet he was anxious, if it was in any way possible, to avoid friction and give this strange character a last chance to adjust himself to life.

When the Warden talked to him Gardner spoke quite frankly. “I’ve had enough trouble,”

he said. “I know you’ll give me a square deal if I behave myself.” He cheerfully gave his word that he would not try to escape. True to his promise, the “lone wolf” caused no trouble at Alcatraz, and associated very little with other prisoners. When, after careful study of his record, the Warden gave him an individual job, making collision-mats for the Navy, he worked on his own responsibility to such good effect that his products passed the Naval inspector’s rigid scrutiny and won him praise. He was released in 1938.

By this time the stormy petrel had lost his fire; he was nearing the end of the trail. After regaining his freedom he first wrote his life-story, which was published as a serial in the *San Francisco Bulletin*. Then he decided to turn showman, and got a concession at the fun-fair of the San Francisco Exposition to prove that “Crime Does Not Pay.” Unfortunately, the show did not attract the public, and true to its name, it didn’t pay.

If, at that juncture, some kindly film-producer had come along and offered to star him in a film of his own career, Roy Gardner might have begun a useful life in the world of entertainment. He was obviously made for the films, and in a screen story of his own hectic exploits he could no doubt have won in a legitimate way the “big money” which had always tempted him. But no such luck came his way.

On January 10th, 1940, Roy Gardner, no doubt depressed by the outlook, ended his life in the spectacular fashion which had characterized all his acts. In his room at a cheap hotel in San Francisco he dropped cyanide into a glass of acid and, with his head covered by a towel, inhaled the deadly fumes. He left his luggage neatly packed, with a half-dollar tip on top of it. Although, by his robberies, he had obtained several hundred thousand dollars, the coroner found that his cash totalled less than thirty shillings!

What happened to all his loot? Nobody knows. Gardner left a note for the reporters; he always thought of publicity, even in death! In it he said he was giving up because he was “old and tired,” and did not choose to continue the struggle.

Such was the miserable end to the sensational career of Roy Gardner—“the last ‘bad man’ of the West,”—which certainly succeeded in proving that crime doesn’t pay.



SHORT STORIES

OUR SNAKE-HUNT

By JAMES MARKS

"AND for why, O my brother, do the white mans drink tea?" From the cookhouse the *piccin's* voice came drifting across the compound on the still night air.

An amusing account of an excursion into the West African bush in quest of a big boa-constrictor.

"Fool!" replied a deeper voice. "The boss drinks tea to make him strong!"

Soon the soft shuffle of bare feet, accompanied by the clink of crockery, could be heard on the veranda. Then Ahmoni Contra entered the room, set down his tray, and growled mournfully: "Icy cold this morning, boss."

"You must be the biggest liar on the coast!" I told him, as I reluctantly pushed aside the mosquito net. Within a few hours, of course, the mercury would be kissing the hundred mark.

Outside a full African moon bathed the bush with silver and deep black shadows. Kamarah, the night watchman, his blanket drawn tightly about him, passed the open door swinging a hurricane lamp and chanting softly under his breath to prove that he was awake.

It was nearly 3.30 a.m., and getting near time to start out on a little job we had been planning for days. "Send in the headman Ekundayo," I requested, lighting a cigarette.

"The boss speaks for Ekundayo!" wailed Ahmoni Contra to the high heavens.

The headman, an intelligent Nigerian domiciled in Sierra Leone for some reason best known to himself, presented himself at the double, carrying the inevitable short stick which denoted his position of authority. He had worked with me on the coast, around Forah Bay and at Tasso, and when I moved to a job up in the Protectorate he had elected to come as well. These days, spent in keeping the boys at their tasks, were probably the happiest he had ever known. He worked willingly, content that at last he had attained his proper place in life. He was a rogue, if ever there was one, but a cheerful rogue, always ready to risk his "copper" on any kind of a gamble.

"Have the boys chopped, Ekundayo?"

"The rice-pots boil, boss; the boys chop one-time."

"Good! We'll move off in half an hour. See if you can get the boys singing by the time I'm ready."

"Surely, surely," grinned Ekundayo.

It was January, 1943, and I was nearing the end of my tour. Within another three months or so my

relief would be due to arrive from England, and already I was preparing for the blissful day when I should go back to the coast and depart for the U.K. At the moment, however, there were various items which required looking into if I wished to be quite ready for the road by the time the new man put in his appearance. For one thing, my mail kept on reminding me that, amongst several other rash promises, I had agreed to return home bringing the skin of a boa-constrictor for a young lady who, having an eye to fashion, had decided on the addition of snakeskin shoes, handbag, and gauntlet gloves to her wardrobe. Such skins, ranging from three up to over twenty feet in length, could be purchased in the native bazaars in Freetown from vendors whose chief mission in life was to relieve European customers of as much cash as possible in the shortest space of time. Thinking things over, I came to the conclusion that one might avoid being fleeced, and at the same time have a little sport, by hunting one's own snake.

Whether I was right or wrong is just a matter of opinion. It must be admitted right away that, although my knowledge of constrictors was somewhat limited, I did possess a rough idea of their habits. Moreover, I had recently encountered a good specimen when I wasn't looking for him. He was quite a big fellow, nicely marked with a putty-and-black pattern which made a perfect camouflage in the surrounding bush-country. These reptiles are non-poisonous, but this is largely offset by their ability to squeeze and crush a victim in powerful coils from which there is very little hope of escape. Quite a large portion of their lives seems to be spent in sleep, and after a good meal they usually retire to a favourite haunt for a prolonged snooze.

On more than one occasion I had summoned Ekundayo to a two-power palaver which centred on the matter of constrictors and their ways. Later, when I told him about my intention to go after one, I found the idea received his immediate and wholehearted support.

Information volunteered by the Nigerian was, in general, fairly reliable, but at the same time the old rascal always had an eye to business, and rarely let an opportunity slip by unnoticed. Conse-



The Author.

quently, when he suggested that I should let him take a couple of boys and go off in search of the hide-out of a big boa, I knew exactly what he had in mind. After I gave him the required permission things turned out just as I had expected. On the first day they had no luck, and at sundown the following evening the trio returned to the compound still without any tidings of success. For a long time, however, I had been aware that Ekundayo and his mates were quite capable of finding an inexhaustible supply of excuses. If I let them, they would spend weeks on this snake-hunting job.

The headman and myself therefore had a little talk, during which he learned that if no boa could be found the following day he would be withdrawn from the quest; I should forthwith select other boys to take up the hunt. Seeing the game was up, but still grinning cheerfully, the wily old sinner made off with eloquent promises of redoubled efforts on the morrow.

Being familiar with some of his methods, I had no reason to doubt Ekundayo would select as his partners local "bush boys" who might already possess the knowledge of a constrictor's whereabouts. It might also be safely assumed that tactful handling by the wily Nigerian would result in the unfortunate boys having to pay him a small fee for the privilege of being appointed to the job! Once the reptile's position had been confirmed, no immediate report of the discovery would be made; the company would merely stow themselves away with a bottle of palm-wine and a supply of tobacco leaves, remaining happily content and at peace with the world until such time as my patience might be expected to be getting exhausted.

Arriving back at the bungalow the following night, I found Ekundayo and his two hunters squatting on their haunches, awaiting my return with subdued but satisfied expressions.

After greeting me and making some irrelevant remarks concerning the high cost of rice, Ekundayo gradually came around to the business on hand. They had, he alleged, located a constrictor which was a "plenty fine big fellah." As the story unfolded, the Loch Ness Monster seemed insignificant in comparison! They claimed, in short, to have found the king of all boas.

"Have either of you actually seen this snake?" I asked the boys.

"No, boss; we no see 'um."

This was exactly the answer I expected but, on the whole, the report could be classed as satisfactory. Bush boys are bush boys; their ways of working are not always clear to white men.

"Well, we'll go after him on Saturday," I told Ekundayo, "so you'd better round up half a dozen good lads for our *safari*."

"Very big fellah, boss," he reminded me, doubtfully. "'Spose you speak for plenty boys?"

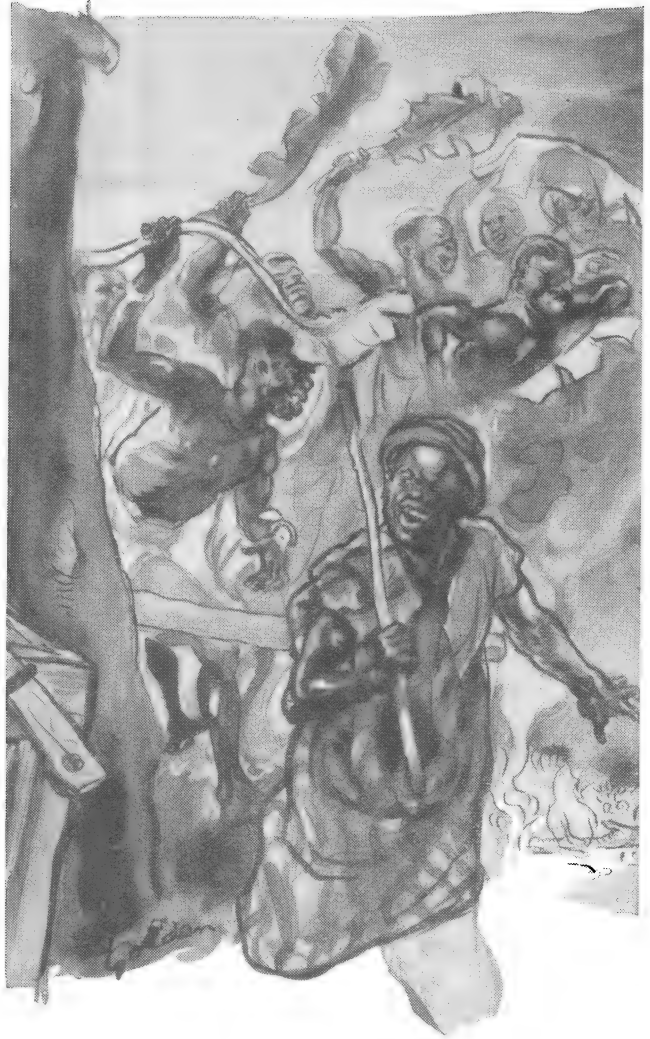
"Six will be enough," I replied firmly.

Having settled this point, the headman intimated he would need some extra help to build and carry a crate strong enough to withstand the monster's struggles. I countered this by pointing out that I hoped to shoot the snake, so why bother with a crate?

Ekundayo looked hurt. It would be far better sport, he suggested, to capture such a fine specimen alive. Moreover, there would be no bullet-holes to mar the skin—and I might even want to make a pet of the creature. His two assistants had already agreed to tackle the job.

"Okay! You win," I said, at last. "Make it twelve boys."

After which preamble the reader will readily understand why we were astir so early on that particular Saturday morning. Before I had



finished shaving a nearby tom-tom began to throb with a deep resonant note. One by one voices crept in to swell the monotonous rhythm which, according to one's personal taste, can be either "sweet music" or a good reason for cursing everything connected with the West African coast. Still, always get your boys singing; then they're far easier to handle.

After collecting such necessary items as tobacco, matches, rifle, etc., I went outside to join Ekundayo. While filling my pipe and gazing on a somewhat familiar scene, I casually asked him what the boys were singing. "They sing 'the big snake lib for die'," he replied.

This struck me as a distinctly bad start. "I see," I said. "And if we don't find a snake you'll tell me he heard what the boys were singing, and cleared out?"

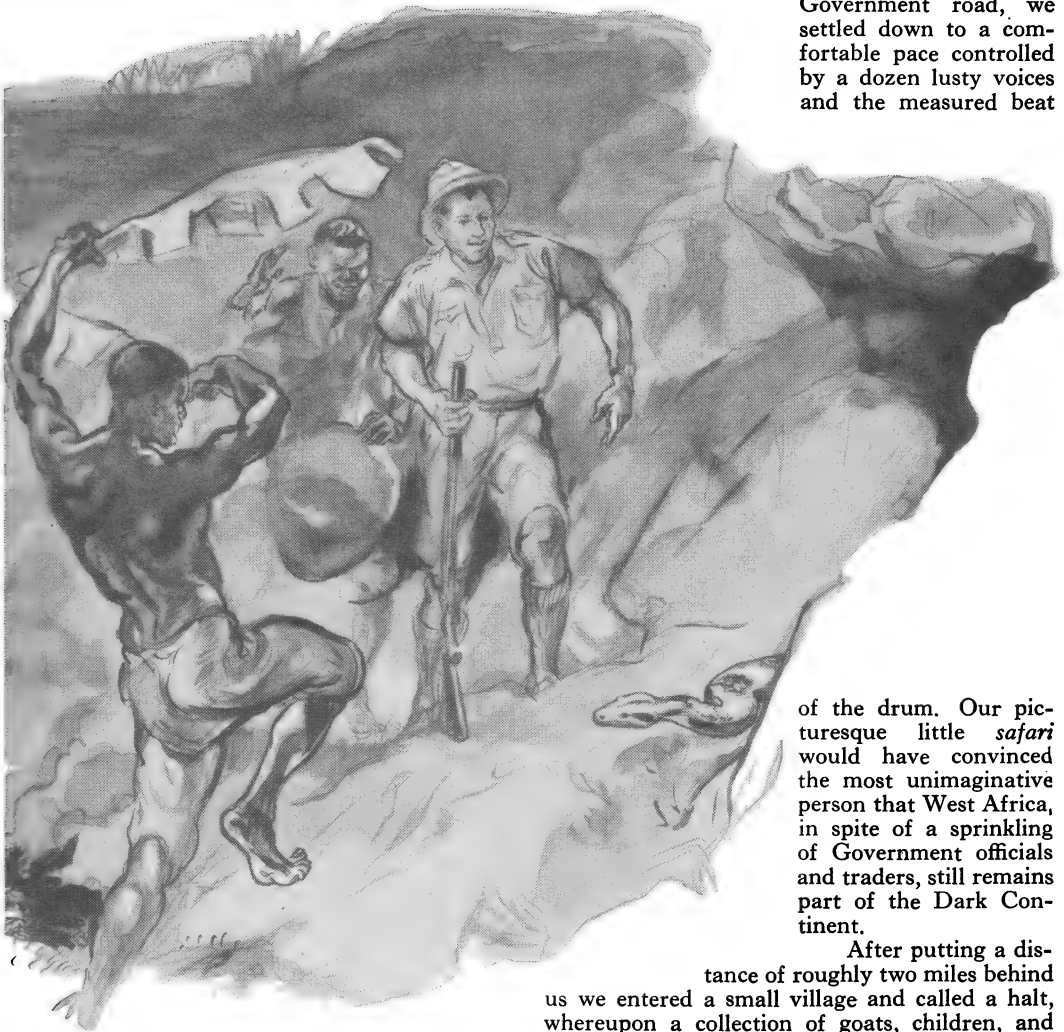
"Yes, boss."

"I give you exactly two minutes, my *piccin*, to put matters right!"

Forthwith the startled headman went into action. Darting in amongst the crouching figures, his swinging cane dropped smartly across dark shining shoulders with a "On your feet! No for sing! You'se want sit here all day, eh?"

Grabbing their loads, the bearers formed a line across the compound. Our crate, lashed to a long pole, accounted for two men; the remainder of the assembly shared between them a miscellaneous collection of *machetes*, axes, and ropes, plus several large empty kerosene-tins. One of the boys who had taken part in the original search fell in at the head of the column to act as pathfinder. At the rear end of the line was the cook-boy, carrying rice and *bonga* inside the pots balanced on his head.

Moving out to the Government road, we settled down to a comfortable pace controlled by a dozen lusty voices and the measured beat



of the drum. Our picturesque little *safari* would have convinced the most unimaginative person that West Africa, in spite of a sprinkling of Government officials and traders, still remains part of the Dark Continent.

After putting a distance of roughly two miles behind us we entered a small village and called a halt, whereupon a collection of goats, children, and anxious parents poured from the doorways of thatched huts to find out what the invasion meant. We set their fears to rest, filled our kerosene-tins with water, and continued the journey.

"The snake was emerging!"

Some twenty minutes later, just before we swung off the road on to a narrow bush track, the pathfinder stepped out of line to ignite a coconut flare. The going now became harder and progress somewhat slower, although the torch carried by our guide spluttered away near the ground, assisting us to find our way round numerous bends. Meanwhile the bush continued to get higher until, in places, it closed in over our heads. A few disturbed monkeys screeched indignantly as they dived away along swinging branches; big, brightly-coloured butterflies fluttered around in circles, only half awake.

The first rays of dawn filtered down to reveal that our track was little-used. In most places it was no more than a couple of feet wide, so when the bearers were eventually called upon to off-load they simply remained in an "as you were" formation. But not for long! Ekundayo lost no time in setting them slashing away with *machetes* to force a pathway through the bush at right angles to the track. On completing this task our perspiring attendants were glad to rest while the headman and myself looked over the lay of the land.

The new path terminated in a fairly level piece of ground flanked on two sides by a sloping bank. It was, in fact, a kind of miniature valley. Three trees, several huge volcanic boulders, and patches of dense undergrowth lay within the area. "He lib over there; we go look 'um," announced Ekundayo, and led the way to a spot where a cave ran diagonally into the bank—the alleged hide-out of our constrictor. I flashed my torch into the gloomy entrance, but could see nothing of the monster.

"Well, I guess we must try to coax him into the open," I said.

Swiftly we made the necessary preparations. Some of the boys set about flattening the surrounding undergrowth to prevent it from acting as protective cover for our quarry; others got busy breaking branches off trees and gathering dried grass, which they piled in front of the cave. Meanwhile, away in a corner, the cook-boy attended to his rice pots, curls of smoke issuing from inside a ring of stones.

Before long, pronouncing everything ready, Ekundayo tossed a light into the collection of rubbish. The kindling flared up and quickly got a hold on the greenstuff as the boys, to the accompaniment of the tom-tom, danced around the bonfire with waving palm leaves, sending a dense cloud of grey smoke rolling towards the cavern. They seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves. What effect the constrictor's appearance would have on the crowd I didn't know, but at the moment everyone acted as if the situation was well under control.

Nothing much happened during the first five minutes or so—except that two big vultures joined our outfit. Perching on a nearby rock, they watched the activity with bleak watery eyes that stared from deathlike heads. The Nigerian also noticed them, but merely grinned and flung a handful of black native pepper into the fire.

Suddenly some hearty shouts caused me to

turn sharply, and I saw that the boys were dropping their makeshift fans and falling back to form a much larger circle. The snake was emerging!

Slowly, with sinuous movements, a big shape slid clear of the bank and, moving with unhurried wriggles, its ugly head raised slightly from the ground, the constrictor drew itself well out into the open, where it came to a halt. It was certainly a fine specimen; I judged it to be a full eighteen feet in length. To my way of thinking the creature was merely resting in an effort to shake off the stupefying effects of the fumes. What's more, it didn't look in the mood for playing about.

"What happens now?" I asked Ekundayo, standing beside me.

"Soffle soffle catch the monkey, boss. She no go right way yet."

At this point the snake unwittingly cooperated in its own downfall by moving off towards the nearest tree. Before it could cover the distance, however, one of the bush boys made a dive at its tail, holding it up so that at least a third of its length was off the ground. Thereupon the reptile came out of its trance in a hurry and began lashing around, trying to reach over backwards and strike at its assailant.

Now boas and pythons—both members of the constrictor family—cannot crush their prey unless their tail is on the ground or anchored to a tree. The boy evidently understood that his expectation of life was closely related to this interesting fact. Although he was pulled hither and thither, and at times seemed on the verge of becoming airborne, it remains to his everlasting credit that he never once let that tail touch the ground.

Ekundayo, yelling loudly and waving a piece of rag after the manner of a bull-fighter gone mad, now started jumping about near the snake's head. Presently, gaining its full attention, he began luring it closer to the tree.

Meanwhile two more boys stood quietly facing each other on opposite sides of the reptile's hindquarters. Between them stretched a lengthy rope, which they held fairly taut. At a given signal both lads ran full tilt towards the tree, passing it on either side. The result, so far as the boa was concerned, was rather surprising; it found its lifted head held firmly against the trunk by a rope which was wound and tied in double-quick time.

No self-respecting constrictor, I imagine, likes to be held at both ends at once, and it required considerable physical exertion to get our prize into the crate. But in it went—tail first, and a bit at a time. Strangely enough, after working off a spasm of fury, during which the crate creaked and bulged, the snake eventually settled down quietly and gave us no further trouble. When all the excitement was over everyone looked very pleased with himself.

After lunch, with a pipeful of English tobacco burning nicely, I sat contentedly surveying the scene. On the other side of the clearing, near the cook's territory, the boys squatted

around Ekundayo, who appeared to be laying down the law about something or other. Soon after he had finished talking five small white sea-shells flew into the air, glistened, and dropped back to earth. Those shells, I knew, had their

tops filed off in order to make it an even-money bet as to which side would land uppermost. But the headman always seemed to guess correctly!

The wily Ekundayo was well away, making money out of the carriers!

A HA'PORTH OF TAR

By R. K. ANDERSON, late Superintendent of Excise, Burma



HIS is actually Jack Boyes's story, but

An amusing story describing how a resourceful Excise Officer upset the cunningly-laid plans of a gang of Burmese opium-smugglers.

cover which route was being used so successfully.

I was his chief at the time, knew everything that was going on, and occasionally helped a bit here and there. In all real-life detective exploits it is team-work that brings success.

In this case, however, which put an end to a well-organized system of smuggling opium into a sea-coast town in Burma, Boyes played the leading part. A scrap of special knowledge, picked up in his boyhood, led to the smashing of an illegal traffic which, up to that time, had defied every effort to suppress it.

Jack Boyes was born in Hull, Yorkshire. His father, a seafaring man, after voyaging all over the world, finally decided to make his home in Burma, where his wife and Jack joined him. Before going out East they had lived near the sea, and the boy showed more interest in ships and sailors than in his schooling, spending much of his time helping the fishermen to look after their boats and gear. In this way Jack became well acquainted with tar and its properties. How valuable this familiarity was to prove later in life will presently transpire.

When I took over the Akyab Excise district Jack Boyes was the Inspector at headquarters, and we immediately became good friends. He soon put me wise as to what was going on in our sphere of administration, and effected the necessary introductions to the little local underworld. After a while, thus equipped, I began to pick up sundry items of interest for myself. One of these scraps of information, which considerably disturbed me, was to the effect that although certain well-known smugglers were getting their supplies of opium in pretty successfully (or, in some cases, meeting with disaster) one particular syndicate, which my informant professed he couldn't identify, was having no trouble whatever, invariably running the stuff through without detection. How this was accomplished the other operators were quite unable to fathom.

When I discussed the matter with Boyes he said he had already heard about this mysterious gang, but could throw no light upon either their *modus operandi* or identity. The opium had to come in, either by sea or land, from India, the chief source of contraband; he had failed to dis-

this serious "leak," which reflected badly upon our efficiency, I impressed upon the Inspector the importance of solving the problem without delay. Having now acquired a little more experience, I instructed him to concentrate on certain points when making his investigations. He went off looking very thoughtful.

One day Boyes called at my house, evidently bursting with news. It appeared that, having made a raid, he had come upon two balls of crude opium, quite intact. Would I accompany him to the police-station and examine the stuff?

I went along immediately, and carefully inspected the so-called "balls," which were actually oblong bricks. Save that both bore curious black smears, I could not detect any difference between them and the thousand of other opium balls I had seen previously.

"You see those marks?" asked Jack, indicating the streaks. "They're tar-stains."

I told him I had already guessed as much myself. What significance, if any, did he attach to them?

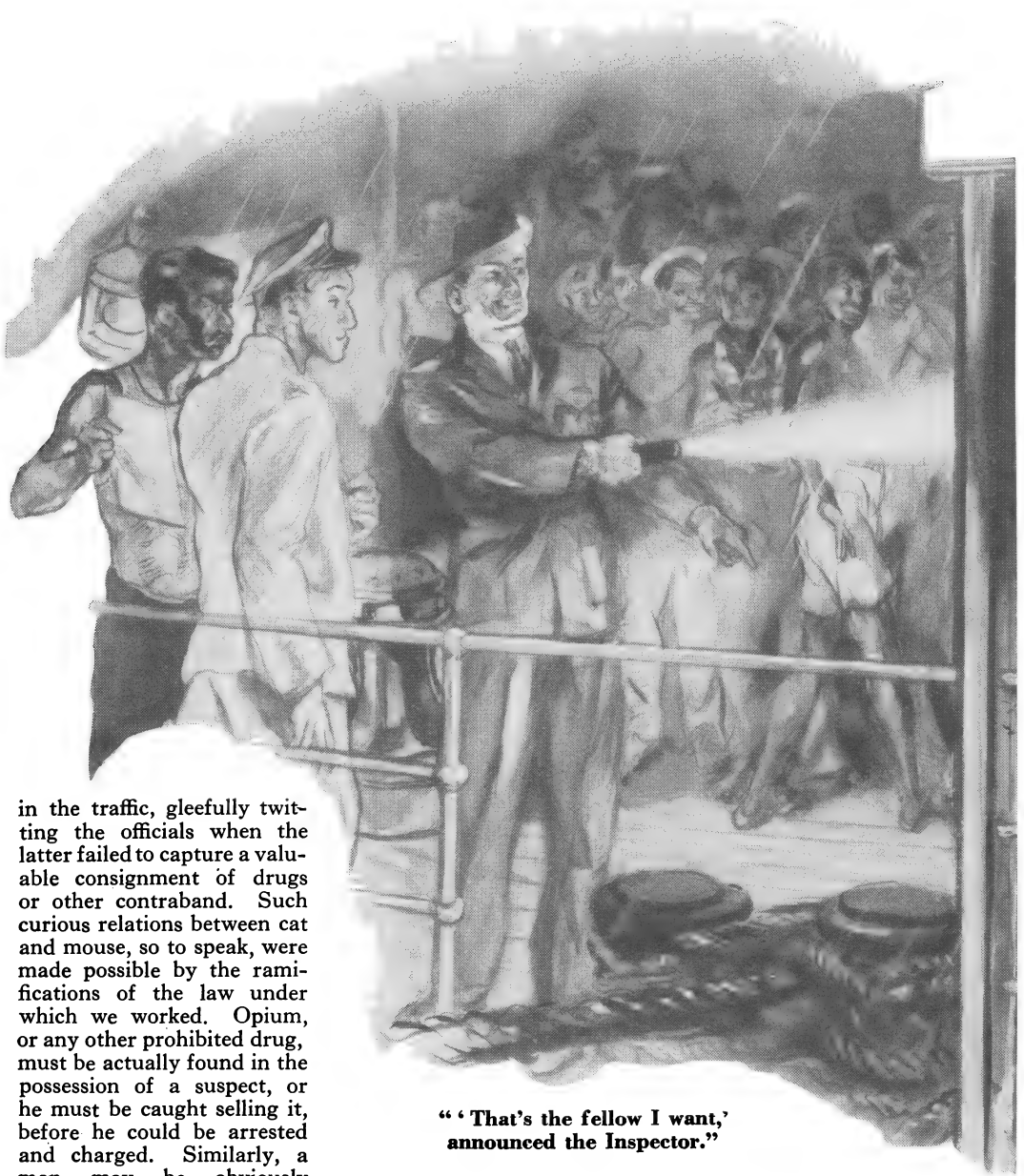
Thereupon the Inspector told me about his boyhood association with the Yorkshire fishermen. "That's why I can say definitely it's coal tar, and not the Stockholm variety," he explained. "Can you tell me, sir, if they use tar in the opium factories?"

The two captured balls being typical of those made in the Indian Government factories, I could see what the Inspector had in mind, and was able to assure him that, to the best of my knowledge, tar was *not* found in such establishments.

"That means we can rule out country boats (native coasting craft) for this little lot," declared Boyes. "It's much more likely—in fact, almost certain—that these balls came by steamer, having been concealed on board in some place where tar is stored. Native craft use Stockholm tar."

I could detect no flaw in Jack's deduction, which seemed to offer a decidedly promising lead. Was it possible, I wondered, if we were on the verge of an important discovery?

The never-ending war between the Customs authorities and the smugglers was relieved by a sort of rough-and-ready understanding. Some of the operators would frankly admit being engaged



**“ ‘That’s the fellow I want,’
announced the Inspector.”**

in the traffic, gleefully twitting the officials when the latter failed to capture a valuable consignment of drugs or other contraband. Such curious relations between cat and mouse, so to speak, were made possible by the ramifications of the law under which we worked. Opium, or any other prohibited drug, must be actually found in the possession of a suspect, or he must be caught selling it, before he could be arrested and charged. Similarly, a man may be obviously under the influence of the forbidden narcotic, but if there is no identifiable particle in his possession he cannot be touched. The “big shots” who organize and finance the traffic are well aware of these loopholes; they never handle the drug personally, never allow it to enter their houses, and therefore remain completely immune from prosecution. Moreover, they have legitimate businesses which ostensibly provide them with a livelihood, and accordingly cannot be charged with maintaining themselves on the proceeds of drug-smuggling or dealing. In any case, one would never be able to obtain the necessary evidence against them!

Such men have no fear of the Excise officers, and will readily tell one about their own

doings or those of other members of the contraband fraternity. By checking one statement against another it is possible to build up a pretty accurate picture of what has been happening in the smuggling underworld. All this, however, only concerns the past; one never hears the faintest whisper of the morrow’s plans! That would be informing; and if there is one person all smugglers hate it is the informer!

Jack Boyes and I, going our separate ways and using our own methods, proceeded to check-up on the latest importations of opium into Akyab. When we came to compare notes we found, to our relief, that no coups at the expense of the Revenue had been brought off during the past fortnight or so. The fact that the two balls

captured were intact appeared to suggest they had come in pretty recently; in the normal way they would have been sent into the interior, or sold piecemeal locally, within a day or two. Jack

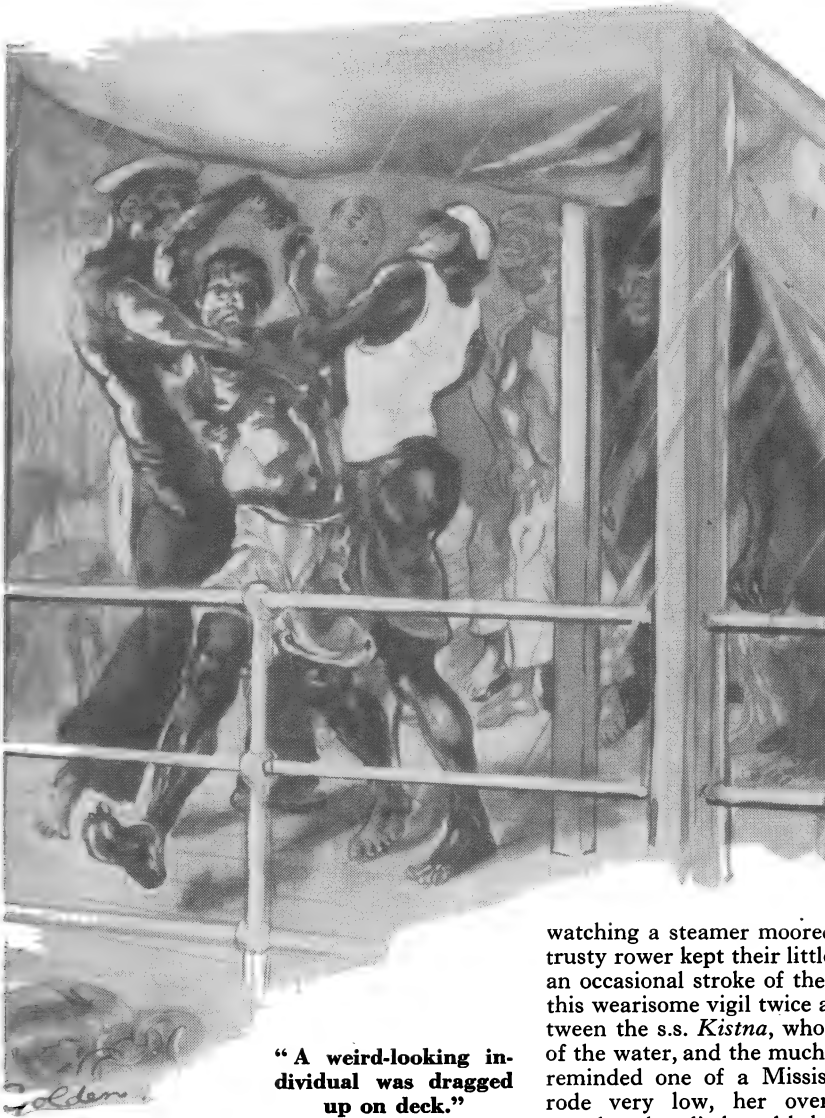
this a Government steam-launch, the *Secure*, the official craft of the Superintendent of Excise, was in the habit of shadowing ships both in and out. By this means we had succeeded in stopping the smugglers from "casting their bread on the waters," so to speak.

That being the case, it now remained for us to examine the possibility of opium being spirited out of a vessel after she had tied up. The chances of getting balls of opium through the Customs gate were exceedingly small, and we therefore concluded that the stuff Boyes had found had been brought ashore by a *sampan*. The obvious thing to do was to catch the boatmen in the act.

Contemplate now, dear reader, a picture of dogged pertinacity—Inspector Boyes sitting hunched-up in a *sampan* in Akyab harbour on a rainy, miserable night, closely

watching a steamer moored to the pier while his trusty rower kept their little craft in position with an occasional stroke of the oars. Jack undertook this wearisome vigil twice a week, alternating between the s.s. *Kistna*, whose hull stood high out of the water, and the much-smaller *Hindu*, which reminded one of a Mississippi river-boat. She rode very low, her overhanging stern being merely a hand's breadth beyond the upstretched arms of a tallish man standing in a boat.

For some reason or other both Boyes and myself had arrived at the conclusion that the opium, brought in by someone on board, was habitually lowered into a *sampan* from the *Hindu's* stern during the hours of darkness. If this theory was correct we might possibly be able to seize the contraband, but we shouldn't be able to arrest the man who dropped it; he would be out of reach. By the time one had rowed to the pier, climbed the steps, and rushed on board the steamer the individual concerned would have safely retired to his own quarters. And how could one hope to identify a particular native among the Chittagonian crew of the *Hindu*?



"A weird-looking individual was dragged up on deck."

remained convinced they hadn't arrived by country boat, but by steamer. The only such vessel that had lately reached Akyab was the s.s. *Hindu*, a little coaster which plied between Calcutta and Rangoon, calling in at Akyab with a few passengers and sundry oddments of cargo. We therefore decided the opium must have come by the *Hindu*; somebody aboard her must be acting as the go-between.

We were well aware, of course, that contraband had often been thrown into the sea from incoming vessels packed in water-tight cases which floated. These precious packages were promptly retrieved by confederates waiting in *sampans* and taken ashore. In order to prevent

Another snag lay in the fact that we could not hope to catch the operator ashore who eventually received the opium. If we could only capture his carrier, however, and induce the fellow to talk, the rest of the gang might fall into our hands. So Boyes patiently continued that twice-weekly watch.

One night in the middle of the monsoon, when the sea was distinctly rough, causing the little *sampan* to dance uncomfortably, Dame Fortune suddenly took pity on the Inspector and decided to give him a break. The *Hindu* lay at the pier, as usual, and the choppy waters of the harbour were practically empty; no boatman would be afloat in such weather unless he had some very important mission on hand. Presently, however, Jack observed a *sampan* heading towards the steamer, the solitary rower at the stern obviously having considerable difficulty in keeping his footing.

Boyes promptly ordered his companion to intercept the other boat, and he was soon alongside. As they approached, the figure in the other *sampan* ceased his efforts and crouched down in the bottom of the craft, but, seizing the gunwale, the Inspector sternly bade him sit up and explain himself. With the two *sampans* rolling and pitching on the swell he continued to interrogate the badly-frightened Burman youth until, as he told me later, the boy meekly answered all his questions. Finally, confiscating the man's oars, so that he would be out of action for awhile, he left the trembling fellow drifting helplessly in the middle of the harbour and set off towards the *Hindu*, primed with some exceedingly useful information extracted from his erstwhile prisoner. In addition to the oars, he had likewise taken an electric torch from his victim, and when opposite the steamer's stern he proceeded to flash the recognition signal the youth had divulged. Another set of flashes immediately answered him, whereupon the *sampan* pulled well in under the *Hindu's* counter. Boyes had no intention of flashing his torch in the face of the individual who handed over the opium; such an action would merely alarm him unnecessarily. Instead he laid the torch aside, extracted some object from a gunny-bag, and held it in his hand.

As the *sampan* arrived in position a voice greeted him curtly from above, and presently a heavy tin container was slowly lowered. Jack unhooked it from the rope and stowed it away, grinning to himself meanwhile. When the man above started to haul in his line Boyes held it in check for a moment. Thereupon a shadowy head and shoulders loomed over the ship's rail and a native voice enquired what was wrong.

The Inspector was expecting this, and instantly reacted. Something flew upwards from his hand, and the impact of this bulky object on the face above caused a muffled exclamation and

the instant withdrawal of the target.

Still grinning delightedly, the Inspector urged his rower to pull for the pier steps, hurried up them, and went aboard the steamer. Disregarding the untimeliness of the hour, he tapped loudly on the door of the Chief Officer's cabin. When the sleepy mate appeared, recognizing his belated caller with astonishment, Boyes said: "I'll explain later, but I want you to muster every member of your crew. At once, please!"

The crew were duly summoned to the deck by shrill and urgent whistles, and came tumbling out in extraordinary disarray, wondering what mishap had befallen the ship. When the roll was called, one man was found to be missing.

"That's fine; just what I expected!" commented Boyes. "Now I want that man found and brought to me. I think you'll find him either in a washhouse or near the store where you keep your paraffin."

Before long a weird-looking individual was dragged up on deck between a couple of grinning Chittagonian seamen. His face, neck, and part of his bare chest glistened blackly, and a filthy scum of soapy foam added to the normal ugliness of his countenance. The Chief Officer gasped at sight of him.

"That's the fellow I want," announced the Inspector, grinning anew, and briefly explained the opium incident. "After he'd lowered the stuff and stood looking down at me," he continued, "I swiped him in the face with a mop of cotton waste saturated in tar, so that I could identify him later. I reckon it will take him several hours to clean himself; evidently he doesn't know the best way to get rid of tar."

"What a wonderful idea!" cried the Chief Officer, admiringly. "But what is the best way to remove tar?"

Boyes laughed.

"I'll tell you," he said, "but don't pass it on to your crew! When I was a nipper in Hull I used to play truant from school and help the fishermen to caulk the seams of their boats. I got pretty badly tarred, and Mother always knew where I'd been directly she saw it. I didn't know what to do about it until an old fellow told me to use butter!"

A few days later, with the downfall of this particular smuggling gang practically assured, I paid out the official reward for the *maund* (forty pounds) of opium comprising Jack's nocturnal seizure. I handed him the whole amount, telling him it was entirely at his disposal.

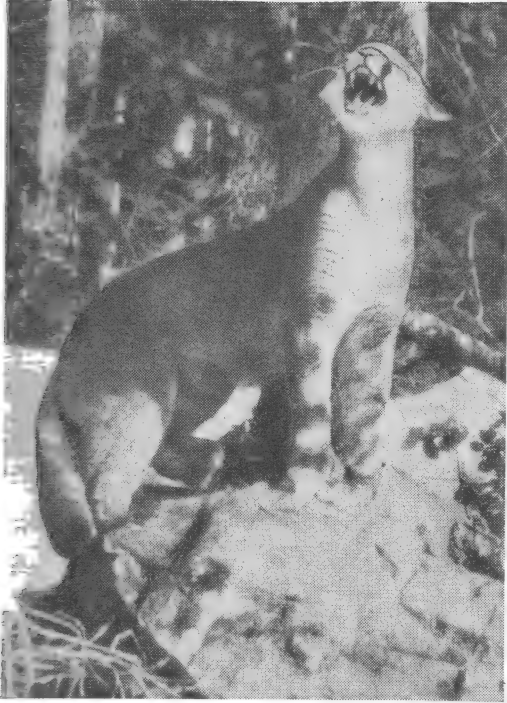
"If you were put to any extra expense, Jack," I added, "you'd better let me know, and I'll pay you that as well."

Boyes grinned.

"No need to worry about that, sir," he replied. "It was only a ha'porth of tar!"

"KILLER" CATS of BRITISH COLUMBIA

By C. V. TENCH



A cougar caught by the foot in a trap.

KILLERS are on the prowl to-day on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, in the shape of tawny-coated mountain lions or, to give them their more commonly used Indian name, cougars. Sometimes measuring over nine feet from nose-tip to tail-tip, and weighing more than two hundred pounds, these big felines are ferocious killers and ravenous eaters of raw meat. Even though their natural food—deer, rabbits, and wild birds—abounds on Vancouver Island, they take heavy toll of domestic animals and poultry. Very frequently, unfortunately, they go on slaughter rampages, ripping and slashing their way through horse and cattle corrals, sheep and pig pens, and chicken-houses, killing merely for killing's sake.

For years the farmers and ranchers on Vancouver Island have been watching this ever-increasing menace with growing apprehension, combining their resources in all-out efforts to combat the threat to their stock. So grave has the trouble become that the B.C. Provincial Government recently voted still more money for a drastic thinning of the ranks of the killers and the appointment of additional "predatory hunters." These men, besides being paid good

Cougars, or mountain lions, have become a serious menace on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, taking a heavy toll of farm stock and even attacking human beings without provocation. The situation is regarded as so grave that the Provincial Government has appointed additional hunters charged with the duty of destroying these four-legged pests. Mr. Tench describes some recent well-authenticated instances of narrow escapes from ferocious cougars.

wages, are granted generous allowances for saddle-horses, jeeps, power-boats, and even aeroplanes. The 'planes are used chiefly for taking skilled hunters and their cougar-hounds with all speed to a danger-area. It is also planned to double the present bounty of twenty dollars for each cougar destroyed.

Yet, despite such measures, recent occurrences suggest that the big cats are becoming bolder and bolder. Unlike grizzlies, who prefer to roam the remote upland country where human beings are scarce, cougars not only prowl frequently and openly in man's backyard, but on occasion even go out of their way to attack people. This year there has been something like an epidemic of entirely unprovoked incidents. In recent years, prior to the present outbreak, in addition to badly mauling a number of adults, mountain lions on Vancouver have killed six children, ranging from a tiny baby snatched from its crib on the porch of its home to a nine-year-old boy fishing alone beside a remote lake.

The details regarding these distressing happenings are too tragic to relate; in this article I propose to deal with cases where the victims escaped with their lives. In this, it may be added, they were exceedingly fortunate for the marauding cougar's speed in action is almost beyond belief. Like all the great cats, it is a bundle of powerful muscles, possessing a strength out of all proportion to its size.

Generalizing about the habits of cougars—or any other wild animal, for that matter—is usually misleading, for although a particular specimen may do something unexpected, this

action cannot be regarded as a pattern invariably followed. Anyone who has had much to do with cougars knows that they possess just as strong an individuality as any human being. No two mountain lions will do exactly the same thing in the same circumstances. In each of the carefully verified instances here recorded the creature did something entirely unusual, as in the first case, where a cougar openly and boldly pursued a wayfarer.

This young man, Wayne Scurry by name, was holiday-making all alone in a remote part of Vancouver Island. Returning to his cabin one evening, he noticed that a large mountain lion was trailing him. Being unarmed, he stopped, turned round, waved his arms, and shouted, fully expecting to see the cougar turn tail. Instead, the brute crouched defiantly in the roadway, snarling balefully and lashing its tail.

Scurry naturally became concerned. His cabin was still a good two hundred yards ahead of him, and the cougar was no more than sixty paces behind. Could he outdistance the animal if he made a dash for it? Deciding this was his only hope, he started running his hardest.

PURSUED!

Glancing fearfully over his shoulder, he saw that the cougar was not only in full pursuit but also rapidly overtaking him! Forthwith Scurry increased his pace, at the same time unfastening his heavy "windbreaker," tearing it off, and dropping it.

Brothers Bag Male Cougar

HILLIERS, March 13. — A cougar hunt proved successful for two Hilliers brothers, Dick and Charles Clarke who bagged a large male cat in the Horne Lake area recently.

Measuring close to nine feet from tip to tip, the cougar was tracked down by four of Dick Clarke's expert hounds.

On a previous hunt this winter Mr. Clarke lost one of his dogs killed by a young cougar when they came upon a female and three half-grown kittens in the Qualicum River area.

An outburst of savage growling in rear caused him to look back again. The lion had stopped to rip the windbreaker to shreds! This gave Scurry time to reach the safety of his cabin. Only a few moments later, however, the cougar arrived, and—still snarling savagely—trotted round the building several times, once even rearing up to glare in a window.

The little house was on the 'phone, and within a few minutes Scurry was 'phoning Fred Knox, a Government predatory hunter living only a few miles distant. Knox, accompanied by three of his dogs, arrived promptly

by jeep. Even then the cougar did not bound away into the woods, but, retreating a few yards, stood narrowly watching the new arrival.

Although his hounds clamoured frenziedly to go after the big cat, Knox knew they would

stand no chance at all in a stand-up fight. He therefore left them tethered in the jeep and, taking his rifle, walked to within a few yards of the crouching cougar, killing it instantly with a brain-shot. I cannot suggest why this particular animal first chased Scurry and then calmly awaited the approach of the hunter.

In another instance a farmer named James Buchanan, "baching" alone on his smallholding near Duncan, Vancouver Island, was preparing his supper when a tawny form suddenly flashed through an open window full on to his shoulders, hurling him to the floor! Instantly Buchanan's fox-terrier flew at the brute, sinking his teeth into a hind leg. With a screech of rage the cougar turned and, with one lightning-like blow, sent the plucky dog against the wall, where it lay

HUNTER BAGS FOUR COUGARS

DUNCAN, March 21 — (CP) — A cougar and her three kittens which killed three lambs and a goat in the last few days were shot this week near here by Frank Holman, predatory hunter.

Town Besieged By Cougars; Hunter Sent

By Sun Staff Reporter
PORT ALBERNI, May 8. — Government predator hunter Jimmy Dewar, of Nanaimo and three hounds were set today for a battle with an army of cougars in an embattled west coast fishing village.

The community of Kyuquot has reported an unprecedented invasion by the big cats.

Government hunter Dewar was rushed to the region by aircraft Wednesday.

These are incidents reported by the residents:

One man was stalked by a cougar to within 200 feet of his home.

A cat swept down upon a fishing float where a group of women and children were standing. It snatched a pet dog and ran off to the woods with it.

One cougar was chased away while stalking an infant by the shore.

Fallers and buckers have been forced to leave cougar-infested woodlands.

stunned. The momentary respite gave Buchanan a chance to roll over on his back, and when the cougar again attacked him he fought back desperately, though half-blinded by the blood streaming from his scalp, where the lion's terrible claws had raked across him. Seizing the big cat's throat with both hands, he drew his legs up beneath the cougar's body. Then, with a desperate thrust of his feet, he threw the brute backwards and upwards. By great good fortune it fell asprawl the hot cooking-stove! Yowling from the pain of the burns, the cougar scrambled madly to its feet and leaped out through the window by which it had entered!

Fortunately Buchanan's hurts, although very painful and bleeding freely, were merely superficial, and after dressing them he telephoned the nearest Government hunter. This particular mountain lion was trailed the next day and duly shot, being later identified by patches of scorched hide.

In yet another recent case a man was attacked by a female cougar without the slightest warning.

Gerald Walters, a millworker, was cutting kindling-wood in the backyard of his home at Port Alice, B.C., when, without even a warning snarl, a mountain lion suddenly leaped from the concealment of a clump of bushes full on to Walters' back. The man crashed to the ground with the cougar on top of him, the small hatchet he had been using flying from his hand. Acting on instinct, Walters brought his hands and forearms up and around the back of his head and neck to protect them, at the same time shouting for help. Meanwhile the cougar started worrying him savagely, using its fangs and formidable claws. Within a matter of seconds Walters' overalls, shirt, and underwear were in shreds, and skin and flesh were being torn from his shoulders and back. The scent of blood seemed to infuriate the animal even more.

TO THE RESCUE

Luckily for Walters an un-

usually brave man, Mr. R. H. Richmond, plant manager for the B.C. Pulp and Paper Company, heard his cries and the cougar's snarls and came running to the scene. Picking up the fallen hatchet, Richmond unhesitatingly attacked the raging cat. Leaving its victim, the cougar flew at this new foe, but Richmond stood his ground, striking again and again at the sleek head, meanwhile evading the vicious blows aimed at him by the powerful forepaws as the lion reared up on its hind legs to fight back.

Walters had by this time struggled to his feet and, despite his grievous hurts, hurried away in search of a firearm. But it was not needed. Watching his chance, Richmond brought the hatchet down swiftly, buried the blade in the cougar's skull, and so killed it. Then he rushed Walters to hospital.

Though Mr. Richmond showed courage far above the average, it seems probable that no man involved with mountain lions has ever exhibited such magnificent bravery as in the following case. This gallant fellow tackled an infuriated cougar *bare-handed*, although well aware that an unarmed man stands very little chance of survival in a battle with a mountain lion.

For three days and nights in June, 1953, a cougar had terrorized the small logging settlement of Englewood, B.C., continually prowling right up to the doors and windows of various cabins. So serious had the menace become that women and children were forbidden to leave their homes until a Government hunter arrived and destroyed the animal.



"Buchanan's fox-terrier flew at the brute."



This fine specimen measured over nine feet from nose to tail-tip.

After several days of anxiety, one young woman, Mrs. Peter Coon, declared she could stand the strain no longer, and intended going to stay with a relative elsewhere until the big cat had been got rid of.

On June 12th, 1953, she set out alone, but was barely ten yards from the door of her house when, with a grating snarl, the cougar launched itself from some nearby hiding-place, thudding down upon her back and crushing her face downward into the ground. It then proceeded to worry her furiously, tearing clothes and flesh from her body with claws and teeth. Pain and terror set the poor woman screaming wildly. There were only three men within hearing distance at the time—Peter Coon, her husband; John Smith, camp cook; and Lawrence Landsdowne, a logger. All three came running. But there were no firearms in the camp, and none of the trio carried a weapon of any kind. For one dreadful moment they could only watch in transfixed horror as the cougar, paying no attention to them whatever, continued savagely biting and clawing its victim.

Coon and Smith dashed away in search of improvised weapons, but Landsdowne—a big, well-built man of forty—did not follow them. Realizing that Mrs. Coon would undoubtedly be killed unless something was done instantly, he proceeded to perform an act of bravery so outstanding as to seem well-nigh incredible. Determined to save the unfortunate girl, he sprang in and tackled the cougar with nothing but



A game warden with his trained cougar-hound and two dead "cats."

his bare hands! Wrapping his powerful arms about the blood-maddened brute's neck, he dragged it bodily away from its prostrate victim!

Then, of course, he found himself in an almost equally perilous predicament. Although his arms were round the cougar's neck, shutting off a good deal of its breath, he could not hope to choke it to death. Yet he dare not let go!

A NIGHTMARE BATTLE

Fortunately he held the frenzied creature from behind, so that, despite its struggles, its viciously-flailing claws only fanned the air. Nor—so long as he had the strength to hang on—could it reach its adversary with its teeth. He had little hope, however, of being able to maintain his grip indefinitely while the big cat writhed and squirmed, striving desperately to free itself.

Next moment Coon and Smith came racing back armed with the only weapons they had been able to lay hands on—chunks of rock! Pantingly, while he and the cougar still swayed this way and that, Landsdowne told Coon to carry his wife to the house, while Smith started striking the cat with his lump of rock. The animal fought so fiercely, however, that Landsdowne was forced to press its head close against his chest. For this reason Smith was unable to brain it, as he had intended; all he could do was to crash the rock again and again against the brute's ribs.

Making a last terrific effort, the half-choked lion tore itself out of Landsdowne's grip and streaked for Coon's cabin, where it wormed its way into a space beneath the building. Still equipped only with rocks, Landsdowne and Smith followed, determined to finish it off. The big cat evaded them by crawling out on the far side and bounding away into the bush, where they dare not follow it without firearms. Peter Coon and Smith then attended to Mrs. Coon's injuries while Landsdowne 'phoned for help to

get the badly-mauled girl to a hospital; he also summoned a Government hunter.

Fortunately the hunter, Skate Hames, was already on his way to the settlement, and arrived soon afterwards. While Mrs. Coon was

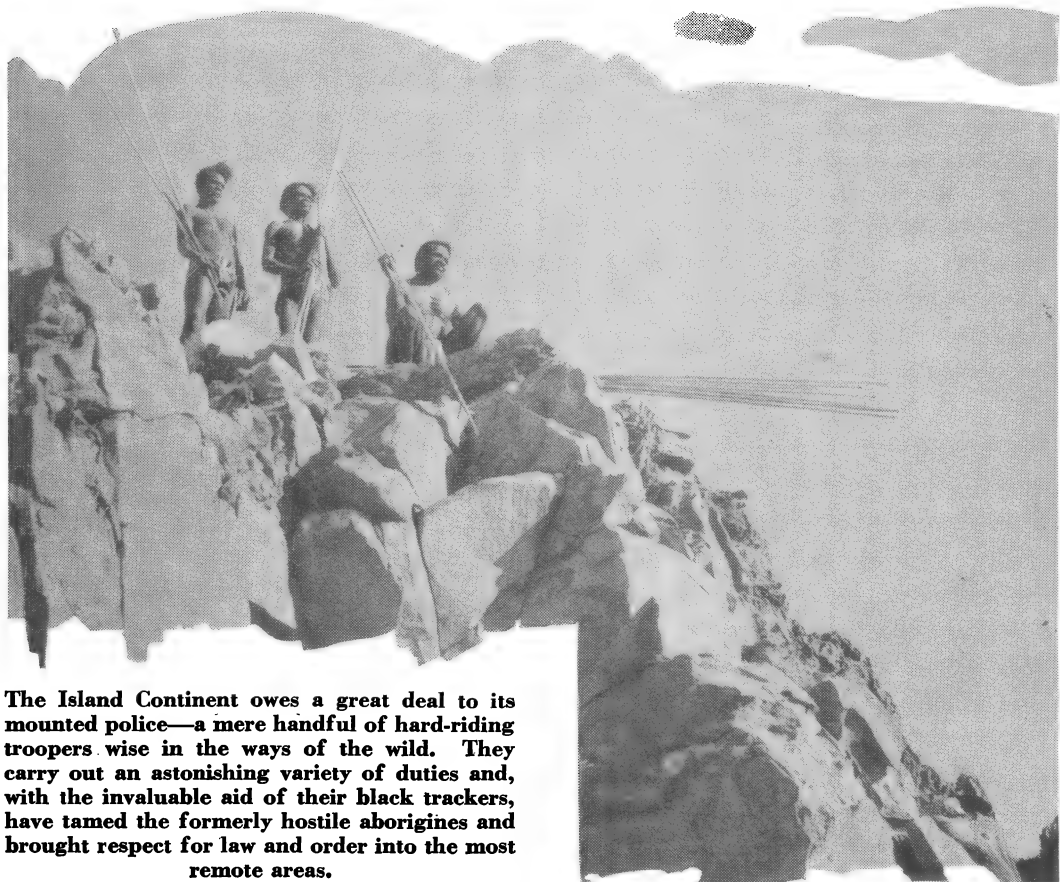


"Landsdowne and the cougar swayed this way and that."

being rushed to hospital, Hames followed the cougar to where it crouched in the shelter of the bush and shot it.

These and other recent happenings have at least taught folk living in cougar country that it is essential to have a firearm on the premises. More Government predatory hunters are also being stationed at strategic points, and residents frequently organize cougar-hunting parties. At the time of writing, however, the big cats are still increasing in numbers, bringing forth their young faster than the adults can be destroyed. The situation undoubtedly calls for organized effort on the part of the Vancouver Island people if they wish to rid themselves of the menace of the "killer" cats—the most vicious wild animals on the island, and a perpetual danger to mankind.

AUSTRALIA'S



The Island Continent owes a great deal to its mounted police—a mere handful of hard-riding troopers wise in the ways of the wild. They carry out an astonishing variety of duties and, with the invaluable aid of their black trackers, have tamed the formerly hostile aborigines and brought respect for law and order into the most remote areas.

UNDER the shadowy cliff of a gorge the police-patrol is saddling up. A dozen mules and horses stand motionless. The two black trackers, in khaki uniforms, sling packsaddles across the mules.

Blue mist hangs in the distance, seemingly deepening the silence of this rocky ravine; the white gums, twisted pandanus palms, and paperbark trees stand out against it in silhouette. The sun is not yet visible, but its first rays strike the crown of the cliff, giving it a terra-cotta glow.

It is a peaceful scene—the waiting animals, the age-old rocks of north-west Australia, the blue mist, and the utter silence.

But things were not always so peaceful on such patrols, for men were speared by hostile aborigines in the Northern Kimberleys as late as twenty years ago. All told, the Kimberley area of Western Australia covers a hundred and twenty-five thousand square miles, about half of it unoccupied. The mounted trooper still carries a rifle, though nowadays he is more likely to use

The aborigines, with their long spears, were formerly a grave menace to the white man.

it for wild game than against two-legged foes. But he may be out of touch with civilization for three months or more, and it is necessary to be prepared for any emergency. He will tell you, of course, that these Kimberley patrols are merely routine—a matter of “showing the flag,” so to speak. It is doubtful if he will encounter more than a handful of aborigines, for these shy folk have a way of melting into the trees at a white man’s approach. Ensnconced high up in the shadows of some lofty crag, keen eyes will watch the passage of the policeman’s file of mules and horses. All the same, he receives continual reminders of their presence. Wherever he travels native smoke-signals rise far ahead of him, warning the nomadic blacks of his coming days in advance. If he is actually seeking some “wanted” man, he will have to use his wits and avail himself to the full of the sagacity of his aboriginal trackers.

Once every year these police-patrols push

MOUNTED POLICE

By GEORGE FARWELL



A black tracker picks up the trail of a "wanted" fugitive.

out into the uninhabited sectors of the Kimberleys, ranging the stony tablelands, negotiating rugged mountain passes, and camping in narrow valleys where great rivers wind down towards the crocodile-infested mangrove swamps fringing the Timor Sea.

The Western Australian Police operate six stations in the Kimberleys; four of these maintain black trackers and horses and mules for patrol-work. Each patrol is in charge of a mounted constable, who takes one or two trackers with him on every expedition.

In addition to his ordinary police-training, he must be a bushman, able to find his way through trackless, uninhabited country. He must also be a good rider, and know how to live off the country if necessary; the ability to handle natives is likewise needed. Finally, a working knowledge of stock is necessary, for the policeman has to check stock-brands, inspect conditions on stations, and deal with questions of stolen cattle. The standard of horsemanship and stock-knowledge required make it almost essential for him to have had previous station experience himself, as is the case with most of the troopers.

Sometimes a good deal more than "routine" is involved in these patrols. It may be a search for some native "wanted" for spearing

the white man's cattle, or murdering a fellow-tribesman. Perhaps a group of nomads suspected of suffering from leprosy have to be gathered in for treatment. As for the whites of the Kimberleys, they are quiet-living types nowadays. Numbering not much over a thousand, they are centred about the more civilized regions, working the great cattle- and sheep-stations along the Ord and Fitzroy Rivers, farther back. Police-patrols call at these stations, but their business there is soon concluded—a question of licences, maybe; the condition of their aboriginal stockmen; a minor complaint or two. Now and then a case of "cattle-duffing" (stealing) may crop up, but rustling on any large scale hardly exists nowadays outside Hollywood films.

On the other hand, these patrols have a considerable value in inspiring respect for law and order. Prevention is better than cure, so the trooper makes his presence known throughout the bush at least once each year.

"In the early days, without these patrols," said Mounted Constable Keith Weaver, of Fitzroy Crossing, "the Kimberleys could never have been opened up. Certainly the country would not have been held by the whites."

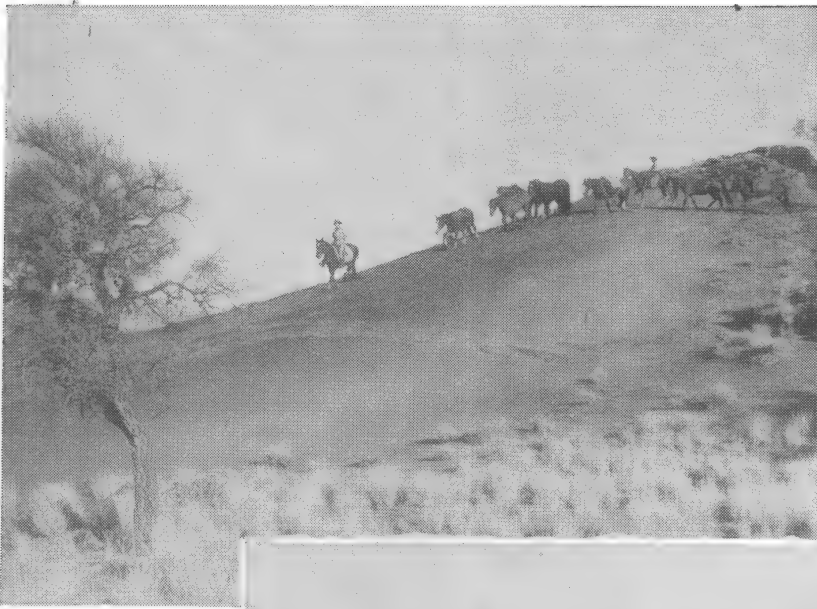
From the police station at Fitzroy Crossing—a tiny township on the Fitzroy River whose



After spending the night at a waterhole, the constable and his trackers saddle up for the next stage of their long patrol.



On the march in the mountains of the Hart's Range, Northern Territory.



A patrol crossing sand-dune country.

A typical settlement in the wilds.



fertile basin lies south of the King Leopold Range — Weaver carries out two long patrols annually. One is south into desert country, where the natives are still unreliable and quick to spear cattle. The other is known as the "Over The Range" patrol, striking into rugged country where only a handful of isolated cattlemen live. The "Air Beef Scheme," which

flies chilled meat two hundred miles from the mountain area to the port of Wyndham, is helping to open it up today, but there are still many thousand square miles of country the white man has never set eyes on.

Here, in the old days, men as well as cattle were speared by hostile blacks. "Pigeon," a native outlaw, roamed the hills and killed eight whites before the police ran him down. "Poddy-dodgers" stole the big operators' beasts and branded them as their own. Many vast stretches of territory, barren or waterless, are too rugged for horses to traverse. Only three or four years ago a trooper lost his horses and mules in this difficult region. They disappeared into the bush, and he was lucky to get out alive.

As a matter of hard fact no police-patrol could find its way through this unfamiliar land without the aid of the native trackers. These aborigines, recruited from the localities they

know, are selected for their remarkable powers of observation. Most natives have extremely keen eyesight, but the police-tracker has special gifts in addition. It is hard to say just what distinguishes him from the next man, except that every human being has some quality a little better developed than another.

The expert tracker makes an invaluable scout, leading a patrol unerringly through the most featureless terrain. His trained eyes pick up details quite invisible to the white man, and he knows by instinct the meaning of a bird's flight or the movements of creatures on the ground. His memory, too, is photographic. He can distinguish one man's foot-track from another, and identify him from his manner of walking. He can not only tell you what sort of animal crossed some patch of bare ground, but state with reasonable certainty just how long ago. A black tracker looking for a mob of

straying horses can even state which track belongs to which animal!

The aboriginal tracker's powers have been described as positively uncanny—as mysterious as second sight. He will follow a "wanted" man's trail across stony plains, over rugged mountains, or through thick grass. Such feats, however, mean no more to him than acute observation, coupled with lifelong knowledge of the bush. From childhood the aborigine has been taught to distinguish the tracks made by emus, kangaroos, lizards, or rats, to study their habits, and to know where and how they feed. He can tell if they are moving fast, walking, or feeding as they go. He learns, first of all, to pick up such tracks in sand, then on hard ground, and finally on stones or rocky hills. There are many signs for the tracker to read—maybe a pebble slightly dislodged, blades of grass pressed down, a twig broken off some bush, or particles of sand left on bare rock.

The expert will even build up a mental picture of his quarry, and will tell you whether a man limps, takes long or short strides, is young and springy, or heavily-built and old. He knows that no two people have quite the same walk; one may drag his left foot a little, while another strides very straightly. Thus a person the tracker has never seen can eventually be identified by some peculiarity of his footsteps.

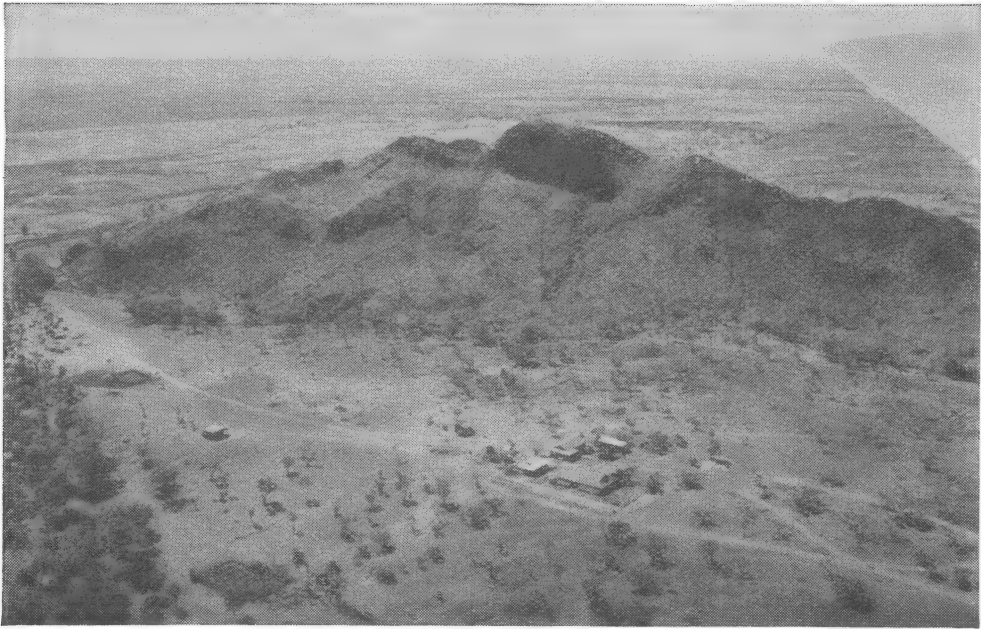
These trackers have become invaluable to the Australian police, and have assisted in saving lives as well as capturing criminals. Whenever some hapless individual becomes lost in the maze of hills and waterless ravines which characterize so much of the Northern Kimberleys the police tracker is the first person to be called upon. Perhaps his greatest asset lies in the fact that he understands the psychology of his own people, and is thus able to anticipate the probable actions of any tribal nomads the police-patrol may be following.

During 1952 the Fitzroy Crossing Patrol was able to recapture two native lepers who had escaped from the Derby Leprosarium three years previously. At the time the trooper and his two trackers were riding along the Fitzroy, making for the Noonkanbah sheep-station. Suddenly one of the aborigines turned aside and rode into a patch of thick timber by the river bank—and there were the lepers! The trooper still cannot understand what gave the tracker his "hunch." When questioned on the subject the native merely smiled, shrugged his shoulders, but offered no explanation.

Perhaps the longest patrol ever carried out in the Kimberleys was one which Senior Constable Jack Purkiss made a few years ago from Wyndham, on the far north coast. Missionaries at the Drysdale Aboriginal Mission, several hundred miles away, had married a native girl to the young man she wanted. This action, however, was in conflict with tribal law, for it had always been the custom for the old men to acquire the young women. Soon after, far away in



The special mounted police water-bag, worn under the horse's neck.



**Turner River Station, an isolated two-thousand-square-mile cattle-run.
Life in such places is lonely indeed!**

wild country, the old warrior to whom she was tribally betrothed demanded his rights. A fight developed, eventually bringing two whole tribes into conflict, and one native was killed.

The affair was duly reported to Wyndham, whereupon Purkiss organized his patrol, saddled up, and rode forth in search of the killer. He was away for nearly *five months*! The only supplies he carried were salt, beef, and flour, but it was not hard to live off the land. His trackers caught fish, wild duck, geese, turtles, and kangaroo, all of which are plentiful along the lagoons and river valleys. Purkiss travelled more than four hundred miles by the time he found his man; thanks to his trackers he was able to come upon him unawares, camped beside the great Prince Regent River.

"We were mighty lucky," said the trooper subsequently. "The Prince Regent, at the point where we found him, is an estuary a mile or two wide. He had only to get on a log, paddle across that river, and we should have been forced to ride another eighty miles to get round, which means we just shouldn't have caught him."

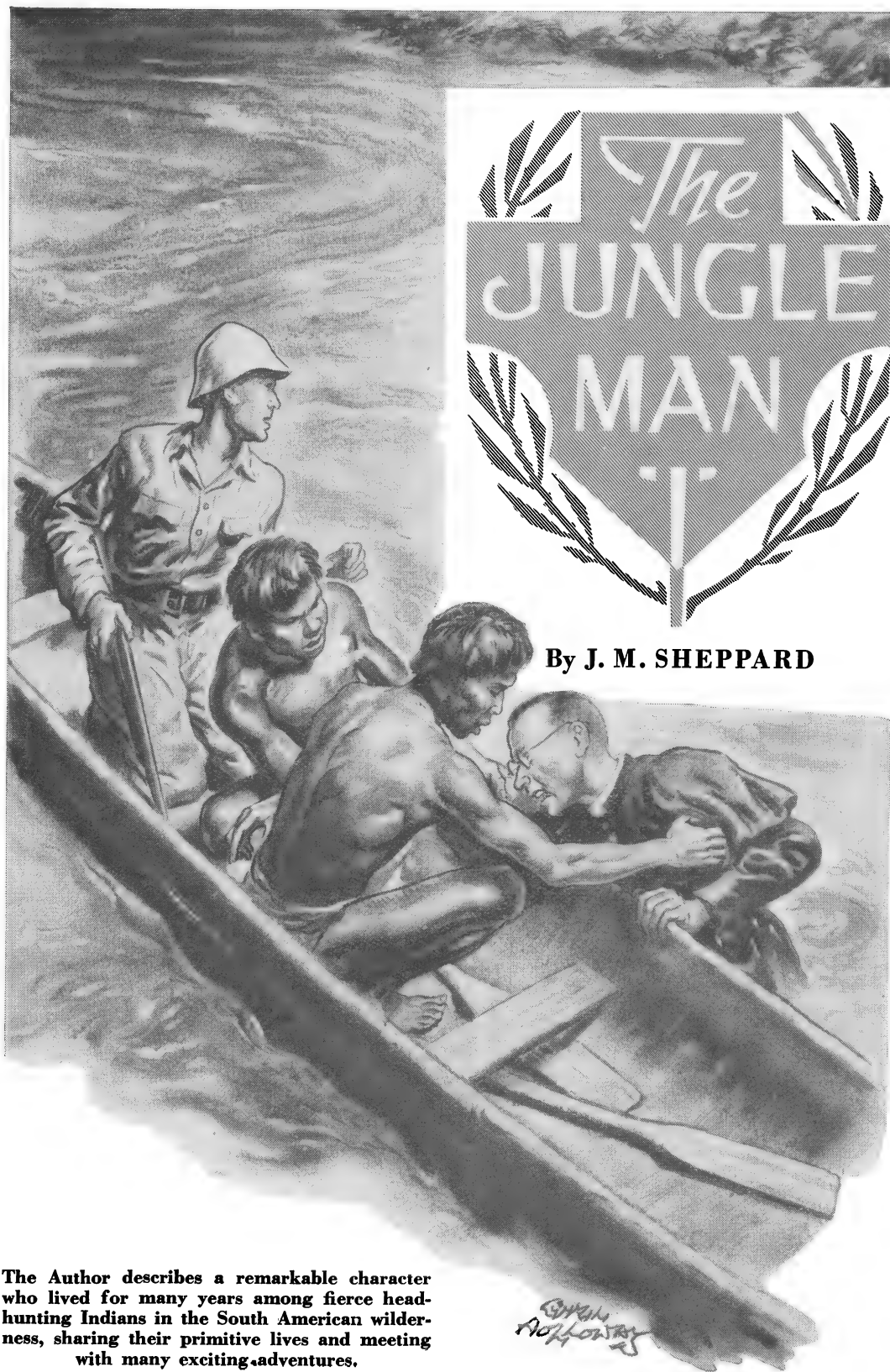
The native was taken all the way back to Wyndham, where he was tried—and acquitted!

A disappointing result, of course, but nevertheless not without its value; the blacks had learned they could not commit murder with impunity.

Modern methods of trial in such cases are very enlightened. A generation or two ago natives were prosecuted in exactly the same way as white men, even though they had no understanding of the processes of law and knew no word of English. Today they are tried in special tribal courts: The two-man bench consists of the district's travelling magistrate and another member nominated by the Western Australian Department of Native Affairs. The defence is undertaken by another Native Affairs officer, who may call on the local black tracker for special advice. If ignorance of the white man's law can be proved, the sentences imposed are light. This, however, does not apply to natives living in more civilized fashion; they are expected to know better.

Australia's mounted police have not achieved the legendary fame of the Canadian "Mounties," but the work they undertake is very similar, and—like their Western prototypes—they have played a major part in the settlement of what was once a hostile and unknown land.



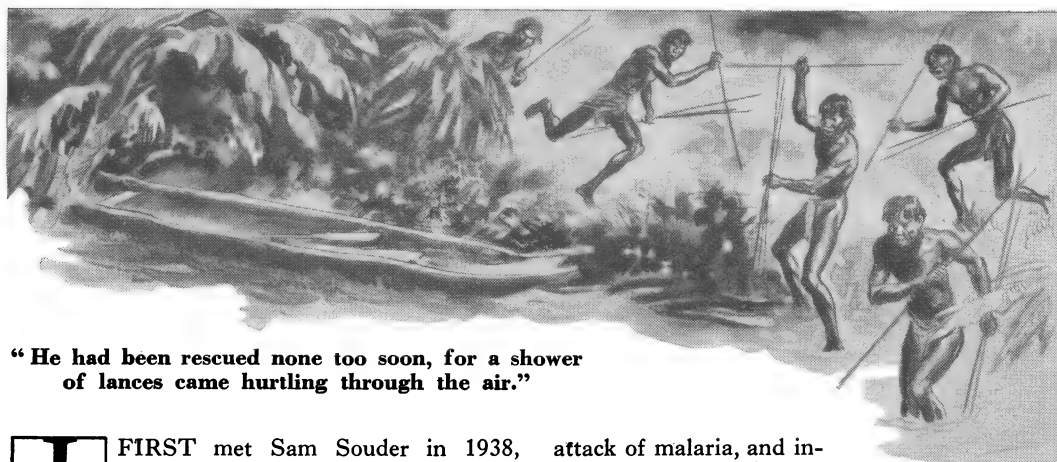


The JUNGLE MAN

By J. M. SHEPPARD

The Author describes a remarkable character who lived for many years among fierce head-hunting Indians in the South American wilderness, sharing their primitive lives and meeting with many exciting adventures.

Graham R. H. 1944



"He had been rescued none too soon, for a shower of lances came hurtling through the air."

I



FIRST met Sam Souder in 1938, when I was engaged on a one-man botanical expedition to the Upper Amazonas of Ecuador and Peru. Reports had reached the United States concerning two fabulous plants that were said to grow in that vast area of jungle. One of these, *Avelina rosada*, was supposed to be the perfect depilatory; the other, *Avelina blanca*, was its exact opposite, for it would grow hair on the proverbial billiard-ball—or so rumour declared! That neither, on investigation, proved to possess the miraculous qualities claimed for it is perhaps not surprising.

An enterprising American cosmetic firm had engaged me to search for the two plants that would respectively remove and restore hair and, fired by the promise of a bonus in addition to my modest wages and expenses, I determined to find them at all costs. Although my mission ended in disappointment, it *did* cause me to encounter Sam Souder. Now, looking back upon the venture, I am not sure that meeting him wasn't worth more to me than the panaceas of which I had gone in quest.

I went to the eastern jungles by way of Ambato, Baños, and finally the village outpost of Puyo. Two days' ride from Puyo, on a razor-backed mule, I reached a navigable river. Having hired a dugout canoe, I engaged a couple of Yumbo Indians to act as my paddlers, guides, and general handymen. With all due respect to the Yumbos, who are invariably respectful, useful about camp, and reasonably honest, I cannot say much for their courage. At that time they lived in mortal fear of the Jivaros and Aucas—two tribes dwelling in the *Oriente*, as this region is called. I must likewise confess to cherishing a healthy respect for the Aucas, but have not found the dreaded Jivaro head-hunters difficult to get along with. On rare occasions they have certainly taken up arms against the whites, but generally speaking they do their fighting among themselves, and treat outsiders well enough if these latter are careful not to offend them or interfere with the curious customs they have developed during the centuries.

A week after leaving Puyo I had a severe

attack of malaria, and instructed my Yumbos to make camp on the river-bank while I devoted a few days to alternate shivering and sweating. In my more lucid moments I doctored myself with five-grain bisulphate quinine tablets. It was the dry season, fortunately, and the Indians swung my big grass-woven hammock between two stout trees. Here I lay hour after hour, listlessly waiting for the quinine to put me on my feet again.

On the afternoon of the second day in this makeshift camp I had just passed through a stage of chills. I could feel the fever slowly mounting, and realized that before long I should become semi-delirious. Suddenly, in the distance, I heard singing—a harsh voice, entirely devoid of tone-quality, but expressive of enormous vitality. Listening intently, I finally forced myself to sit up, for the vocalist was singing in Americanese English. This, I decided, was worth investigation!

Lowering myself dizzily to the ground, I staggered across to the bank and gazed upstream. Presently a huge dugout canoe came round the bend, manned by half-a-dozen stalwart Jivaros, whose paddles flashed rhythmically. In the stern, standing erect, was a tall, slim, sun-tanned fellow with snow-white hair. He was still singing lustily, waving his arms meanwhile.

I yelled to him, but there was no response, and the song continued.

"Hey, Yank!" I shouted. Thereupon the melody ceased abruptly.

The white-haired man said something to his paddlers, and they ceased their efforts; the big canoe drifted in towards my own, tied to a sapling near the bank. I was about to address the big white when my little world suddenly went into a spin; I fell to the ground and knew no more.

"Drink this," said a voice, apparently from far away. Meekly accepting the bottle-neck, I felt a fiery fluid trickling down my throat, scalding my tonsils.

INTO THE WILDS

"Whew!" I gasped. "Wh-what is it? Liquid barbed wire?"

That was my introduction to Sam Souder, grand old man of the jungles, whose career had been a most eventful one. After fighting in the Spanish-American war he had helped to build the "Big Ditch," as the Panama Canal is often called. Then he drifted south to Venezuela, where he ended up as a captain in a revolutionary army which proved to be on the losing side. Escaping westwards, Sam crossed the Republic of Colombia and arrived in Ecuador, where he learned that gold was to be found in the eastern jungles. "That'll suit me," he declared, and proceeded to blaze a trail into the Upper Amazonas region. Here he contrived to make friends with the head-hunting Jivaros, and presently settled down close to one of their villages.

Actually Sam never "panned" gold at all; he discovered an easier way of obtaining it. By acting as a sort of confidential adviser to the Indians, treating their ailments, giving them hints on strategy in connection with inter-tribal wars, and doing a little trading, Souder was eventually able to convince the Jivaros that his abilities were worth a fair share of the yellow dust and nuggets they won in secret places. Every six months he would make a trip "outside," bringing back trade goods—cloth for the women, *machetes* (jungle knives) for the men, and gee-gaws for both sexes. Gradually he won their hearts and finally determined to make his home among them.

After a couple of years Souder took over a large tract of land and started to create for himself a veritable Garden of Eden. Before long he had groves of banana trees, citrus fruits, *avocados*, *papayas*, and many other things, including vegetables. He had a comfortable house, built of bamboo and thatch, and the hunting and fishing left nothing to be desired.

I have mentioned these details to give you some idea of the man and his background. Now let us return to our first meeting.

Having restored me to consciousness, my new acquaintance had me carried to his own canoe, under the thatch-roof midship section, and took me to his riverside home, where I soon recovered from the bout of malaria which had laid me low. During the days that followed we had many long conversations, and Sam taught me a lot about the jungle. I had spent a good deal of time in the forests of Central America, but was unfamiliar with local conditions, and Souder's experience proved invaluable.

Sam's adventures, as unfolded to me during my sojourn and various subsequent meetings, would fill volumes. For the purpose of this narrative, however, I have selected a couple—typical of the exciting career of this remarkable man.

Some time previous to our meeting a white man who was obviously a "bad lot" arrived at Sam's house from nowhere in particular seeking food and shelter. Souder suspected he was a criminal fleeing from justice; he didn't like the look of him at all. Nevertheless, he took the stranger in; one white man in the wilderness

feels in honour bound to help another. After enjoying Souder's hospitality for some days the sinister guest disappeared—and with him went Sam's new repeating rifle!

The following day the old trader bewailed his bad luck to a young Jivaro warrior who came along to exchange a "poke" of gold-dust for some *machetes*. The Indian proved very sympathetic. "What will you give me if I bring your gun back?" he asked in his own tongue, which the big American had long since learned.

"If you can recover that rifle I'll give you a twenty-yard bolt of red gingham cloth," answered the trader; and almost before he had finished speaking the Indian had trotted off down the trail.

A fortnight went by, and although Sam still mourned the loss of his cherished rifle he had little hope of ever seeing it again. One morning, however, when he was drinking his usual cup of black coffee, he observed the Jivaro approaching. Slung over the Indian's shoulder was the missing weapon!

Marching up to the astonished Sam, the Jivaro solemnly handed the rifle over.

"Now give me the cloth," he said, and forthwith Souder went back inside the house, unpacked a bolt of bright-red gingham, and presented it to the delighted young man. The couple then sat in silence for a long time while the new arrival drank two cups of coffee and smoked several of Sam's home-rolled cigarettes.

Finally the trader asked the question that had been puzzling him.

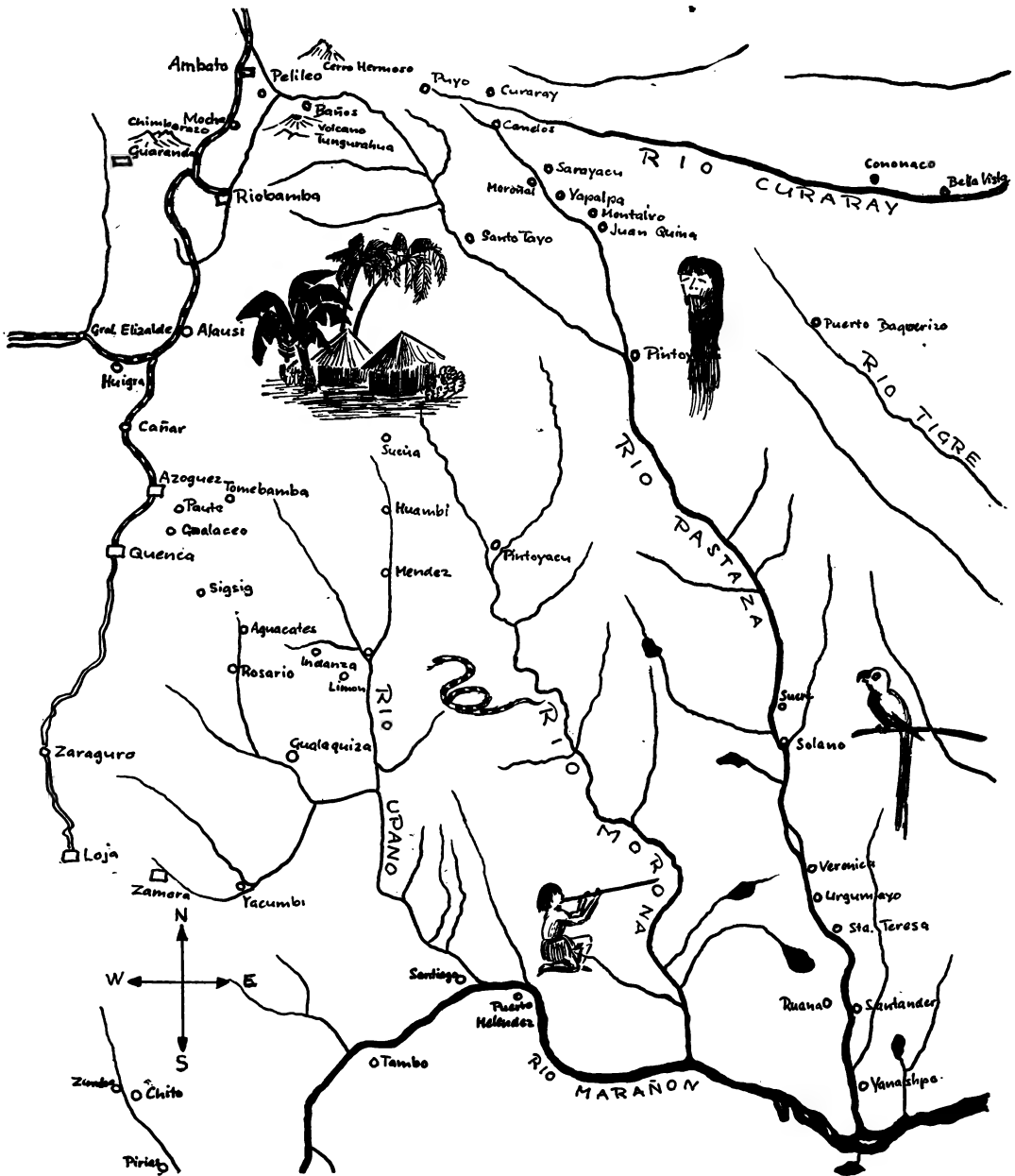
"How did you manage to get the gun?" he demanded. "Did you grab it while that fellow was asleep? I know you couldn't tackle him in the open; he had a shotgun and a revolver in addition to my rifle."

"The weapons that speak are useless against me," replied the Jivaro, stolidly. "The white man never even saw me. I got ahead of him on the trail and waited behind a thick bush. When he came past I simply reached out and lopped his head off with one of those *machetes* I got from you!"

THE PROOF

Souder made no comment, but he must have looked incredulous, for without another word the Indian rose to his feet and strode to the front of the house, where he had deposited a tightly-woven bag. Fumbling inside it, he brought out the fugitive's head and laid it at Sam's feet!

The trader's home was situated on the banks of the Rio Curaray; across the river, to the north, lay the territory of the Aucas Indians. The Aucas are a tribe to be left strictly alone; nobody wants anything to do with them! They are literally *deadly*, killing intruders on sight. Even the Jivaros fear them, and no man in his right mind, be he white, brown, or red, sets foot in their country if he can possibly help it. The gradual opening-up of the wilds has had no effect on these primitive savages. Many of the Jivaros have become semi-civilized of late years,



This sketch-map, drawn by the Author, shows the vast "Region Oriental" of Ecuador—the great jungles lying east of the Andean Cordillera. Mr. Sheppard writes: "This area has only been semi-explored, possesses no roads, and is inhabited by various wild Indian tribes such as the Aucas, Jivaros, Zaparós, Yumbos, etc. The places marked as towns usually consist of only two or three dwellings, inhabited by whites or near-whites. The Indian villages, which are much larger, are not shown at all, since their location is frequently changed. Placer gold is to be found in the rivers and streams, and attracts a few bold spirits, some of whom make good pickings. It was in this little-known wilderness that Sam Souder spent many years among the head-hunting Jivaro Indians living on the Rio Curaray. The places mentioned will be seen at the top of the map."

but the Aucas remain just as truculent and irreconcilable as they were thirty-odd years ago, when Sam Souder first settled in the jungle. As recently as last August the village of Arajuno was attacked by a band of Aucas, who killed and wounded a number of the inhabitants.

Oddly enough, these Indians have never learned to build or use canoes, and few of them can swim. On their sporadic raids across the river into Jivaro territory a dozen or more tribesmen will hang on to a balsawood log, supporting themselves with one arm and kicking out with their feet to propel their odd craft through the water.

Sam told me of an occasion when a missionary priest came down the Curaray and stayed with him for a few days. The *padre* was determined to make an attempt to convert the Aucas, or at least a few of them. Souder tried hard to dissuade the good Father, pointing out that every such effort had failed, and that even to set foot upon their territory was tantamount to suicide. The missionary, however, remained adamant.

One bright morning the *padre* and his two Yumbo guides pushed off in their canoe and, after beaching it on the Aucas side of the stream, penetrated the jungle along a narrow trail that came down to the water's edge. The Yumbos, apparently, hadn't the slightest idea of the mortal danger to which the priest's action was exposing them.

It was the missionary's idea to leave gifts at intervals along the track and then return to Sam's house. He proposed to repeat this process daily until he got into contact with the Indians.

"I guess the *padre* thought the presents would soften-up the Aucas," said Sam, grimly. "He didn't know how tough those babies are. The only thing that will soften *them* is a bullet!"

On the off-chance that the misguided man might get away alive, Souder collected a party of his Jivaros, placed them in his big canoe, and then pulled out into midstream to wait. Sam was armed with his shotgun and a rifle; the Indians had their lances, short daggers, and bows and arrows. (The Jivaros hunt with blow-guns and poisoned darts, but never use these weapons against human beings.)

TOUCH AND GO

About an hour went by, but there was no sign of the trio who had landed on the little beach opposite, and no sound came from the jungle. The trader was just about to give the order to return when he observed the priest dashing headlong down the trail, his cassock tucked up about his waist. Shouting "Help!" at the top of his voice, and ignoring his own

canoe, he plunged into the water and swam vigorously towards the big dugout. Souder ordered his Jivaros to paddle towards the missionary, and within a few minutes they hauled him aboard, completely exhausted. He had been rescued none too soon, for he had

hardly been deposited in the bottom of the canoe before a shower of lances came hurtling through the air and a dozen or more Aucas warriors appeared on the bank, shouting what were doubtless dire threats and gross insults. Fortunately none of the missiles reached the dugout, and in a matter of seconds the craft was out of range.

It transpired that both the unfortunate Yumbos had been killed on the trail. According to the priest, he owed his own escape to the fact that he had lagged behind on the extremely narrow path. When the first lances struck the luckless guides he had been far in rear, and immediately turned to flee.

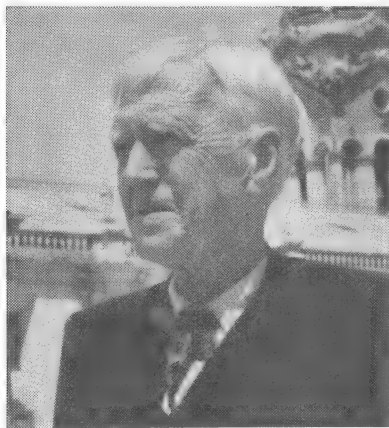
"For the moment," he said, "I don't think the Aucas observed me; they were too busy with my poor helpers."

After this experience, needless to state, the *padre* reluctantly abandoned his cherished scheme for establishing friendly relations with the Aucas.

On the few occasions when these fierce savages crossed the river and succeeded in killing Jivaros, Souder told me, they invariably left their lances in the bodies of their victims as a species of grim trade-mark. Now and then, by way of retaliation, the Jivaros girded on their weapons and struck back at their hereditary enemies—often with considerable success. The Jivaro, unlike his timid cousin the Yumbo, is extremely courageous, and many an Aucas warrior lost his head during these raids. The feud between the two tribes is endless, and will cease only when civilization eventually reaches this great wilderness and begins to develop it for food-growing.

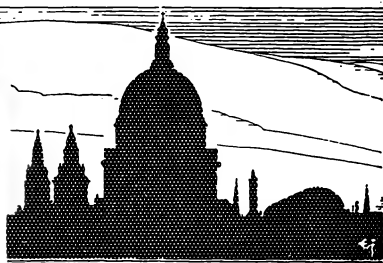
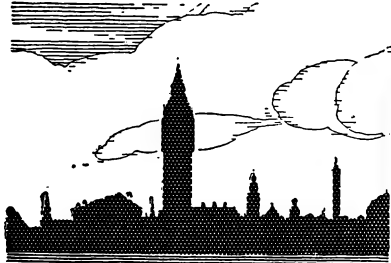
Three years ago the redoubtable Sam Souder decided it was time to abandon his strenuous existence among the primitive Indians of the jungle and seek the amenities of the cities. Now—in his eighties, but still hale and hearty—he lives in Quito and, by local standards, is a comparatively wealthy man. Unlike so many adventurers, he did not waste his hard-won gold, and by the time he determined to spend the evening of his days in civilization he had a fair-sized fortune tucked safely away.

To-day, whenever the sun is shining, you will find him sitting on a bench in the *Plaza Independencia*, surrounded by a group of old cronies, swapping yarns of bygone days. Very few men know the interior jungles and the wild tribes that inhabit them better than old Sam Souder!



Mr. Sam Souder as he appears to-day.

BETWEEN OURSELVES



CONGRATULATORY messages continue to reach us in connection with the "Bigger and Brighter" WIDE

WORLD, which has been received with enthusiastic approval in all quarters. The new clear-faced type, so kindly to the eyes, is particularly popular, and everybody likes the easier handling provided by extra width. "These improvements bring the good old Magazine very close to perfection," declares a North Country correspondent. We are naturally delighted to have pleased you.

By
The EDITOR

dents, had decided to abandon the work, but the idea of danger struck me as absurd. I hadn't been using my pick for more than ten minutes, however, when a tiny chip of stone shot into my right eye, compelling me to cease operations and seek assistance. Unfortunately complications ensued, and later on I had to have the eye removed. Just 'coincidence,' of course, but I am now firmly convinced that, superstition or no superstition, some things are best left alone! I wonder if any other readers of the Magazine have had similar experiences?

vinces that, superstition or no superstition, some things are best left alone! I wonder if any other readers of the Magazine have had similar experiences?

THE "FAIRY RING"

A Dublin reader sends us an account of a curious coincidence. He writes: "Your issue for Sept., 1950, contained a story entitled 'The Stolen Idol,' which had special interest for me. The narrative deals with the theft of a sacred image from a Japanese temple, and one of the characters concerned lost an eye and a hand—seemingly as punishment for his sacrilegious act.

"In various parts of Ireland there are to be found ancient earthworks, known as 'fairy rings' or 'forts,' which, according to popular belief, are places to avoid; misfortune is liable to overtake anyone rash enough to interfere with them. They take the form of large circular mounds, strongly buttressed with stones. Some few years ago, while on holiday in the country, I took a hand at helping to demolish a 'ring'; the ground was needed for some purpose or other. Several of the men, having met with minor acci-

MONEY TAKES FLIGHT

The same correspondent forwards the annexed cutting from the *Sunday Independent*, dealing with a bird that apparently decided it could find a use for a few banknotes. The newspaper also published a photograph of Mr. McConville holding the dead hawk, and we congratulate this gentleman not only upon his presence of mind but also his excellent marksmanship. He has certainly given "getting the bird" quite a new meaning!

THE SIMONSTOWN BABOONS

We come now to a curious wild-life mystery—yet another of those odd WIDE WORLD "sequels" which crop up with such remarkable regularity. Mr. Eric H. Little, of Cape Town, South Africa, writes:

"About a year ago the WIDE WORLD published a little story written by a sailor stationed at the Simonstown Naval Base, South Africa.



BABOONS MYSTERY: DID 9 DIE IN RESCUE BID?

A THEORY that nine of the 10 baboons found drowned in a tank at a holiday camp at Redhill, Simonstown, on Saturday sacrificed their lives in trying to rescue a young mother of the troop was advanced yesterday.

Mr. H. J. Hardisty, a municipal employee, who was called to remove the bodies, and Mr. W. Fish, proprietor of the camp, which was formerly the General Botha training camp, both hold this view.

They told the Cape Times that the water was about 8 ft. deep and about 50 ft. wide. The water was about 4 ft. below the top of the concrete wall surrounding the tank.

Mr. Fish said: "One of the troop of four large males, four females and two young ones probably fell in the water."

KEPT WATCH

"It may have been one of the

smaller ones, and the others all went in to its rescue. I did not hear, or see anything that could have alarmed them so much that they all jumped in to escape from possible pursuers."

While the bodies were being taken from the water, a large baboon, seated on a koppie overlooking the tank, watched the proceedings.

Mr. Fish believes that the same baboon, with one or two others, paid another visit yesterday morning, apparently to see if there were any signs of the missing baboons.

A student of the University of Cape Town called at the camp yesterday to inquire whether he could have one or more of the carcasses. He was told they had already been buried.

"The creatures never make a raid without leaving one of their number to stand on guard. This sentinel selects a high rock or crag, and barks a warning the moment he sights danger. The brutes are so cunning that it is almost impossible to stalk them with a gun; the look-out always gives the alarm long before the hunter can get within range.

"For some time past the Municipality of Simonstown has employed an armed ranger to protect houses against baboon raids, but the sagacious creatures invariably manage to elude him. Now, however, it looks as if Simonstown's baboon troubles are over for a while, because most of the members of a notorious local troop have been found mysteriously drowned in a private dam, as mentioned in the attached newspaper cutting.

"The generally accepted theory is that one of the troop fell into the water and that the others went to its assistance. Up to the time of writing, however,

He described how, returning to his room at the local hotel, he found a huge baboon busy ransacking his belongings.

"These animals come from the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, situated about fifteen miles from Simonstown and sixty from Cape Town. The baboons cross a range of mountains to reach Simonstown, and during the last six months one troop in particular, led by a huge shaggy brute, has become very bold; its members enter the houses and frighten people.

"Quite recently a small boy had a terrible shock when he was cornered in his bedroom by one of the baboons. The child's mother, hearing his agonized shrieks, rushed in and, wielding a broom vigorously, succeeded in driving out the ferocious intruder.

"Time after time these animals, under their wily leader, have invaded houses to pilfer food from kitchens or vegetable gardens. One baboon, brought to bay by a big dog, actually tore a wooden gate to pieces in order to escape. Tremendously powerful, the baboon can be very dangerous when cornered, and will not hesitate to attack man or dog. Unless a dog is exceptionally agile it is no match for a baboon, who will drag its adversary towards it, and rip his body open with its long powerful claws.

no satisfactory solution has been found for this mass tragedy, for—as already mentioned—baboons are exceptionally intelligent and cunning."

EUROPEAN FIRE-WALKERS

We have published accounts of fire-walking ceremonies in various parts of the East, but it comes as a distinct surprise to learn that similar performances still take place in Northern Greece. Group-Captain A. Xanthopoulos, of Athens, writes: "This ancient Thracian custom is observed every year on Sts. Constantine and Helena's Day (May 21st) at the town of Langadas and the village of St. Helena, near Serrai, which lies north-east of Salonica. Many British ex-Servicemen will remember these places from World War I. I enclose a cutting from the Athens daily newspaper *Kathimerini* (not reproduced), of which the following is a literal translation:

"Salonica, May 21st. From Our Own Correspondent.

"To-day many visitors from Athens and neighbourhood gathered at Langadas in order to witness the picturesque custom of fire-walking. The sanctification and the usual ceremonial killing of the calf took place in the morning. During the afternoon a fire had been lighted in the grounds of the Gymnasium, and a group of ten

men and women, headed by Mr. G. Emmanuel, leader of the fire-walkers, began to perambulate the blaze, holding aloft the ancient *ikons* of Sts. Constantine and Helena and continually passing through the fire. This will be repeated on Saturday.

"On the same day, at the village of St. Helena, in the province of Serrai, the local fire-walkers—three men and two women—carried out the old custom by dancing on the fire for three minutes."

Photographs reproduced in another Greek journal show the performers—apparently dressed in their ordinary clothes—trudging through a bed of glowing embers without betraying any signs of distress or haste.

AFRICA'S SMALLEST POST-OFFICE?

While Australia and New Zealand dispute in friendly fashion as to which of them owns the smallest post-office—Australia has just put forward a claim for a building measuring six feet by four!—our South African readers have evidently been taking a look round to discover what *they* have to offer in the way of diminutive P.O.s. Now Mr. E. R. Harrison, of Mtubatuba, Zululand, sends us the accompanying photograph and writes as follows concerning it:

"I believe this building to be the smallest post-office in Africa. Despite its size, it is complete with all the usual facilities—a telephone exchange and operator; a counter where a clerk attends to the public; a 'phone for general use; and a Morse machine for transmitting telegrams. This office is situated in the south-eastern area of Swaziland, at a tiny place called Kluti. You will notice that a thatched roof has been erected over the building to protect it from the fierce tropical rain, the roar of which on the corrugated iron would otherwise make work impossible. As will be realized from an inspection of the picture, there is very little room inside the office for the staff of two and their equipment."

KARACHI TO CORNWALL

Our readers are determined not to let us miss any reference to long-distance bottle-messages! Here, from the *Birmingham Mail*, is the latest example. It would be in-

teresting to know the identity of the launcher of this much-travelled bottle, and how he came to entrust his greetings to the ocean. The details given are decidedly sketchy, and perhaps, Mr. Brownhill, of Darlaston, would be good enough to supply some further information.



JUNGLE POLICEMEN

You will recall the very interesting article "Jungle Man-Hunters," which appeared in our November issue, and dealt with the Rural Police of Ecuador, South America. This *corps d'élite* maintains law and order throughout the vast interior wilderness of Ecuador, waging continual war

on bandits, cattle-rustlers, and other criminals. Owing to the hazardous nature of their duties the annual casualty rate is very high, and for this reason only single men are accepted as recruits, and must leave the service on marriage.

Mr. J. M. Sheppard, the author of the article, has recently sent us an account of the death of a young Rural Police constable who was brought down-river to Guayaquil by canoe with four revolver-bullets in his body, but died soon after his arrival. The officer had received his wounds while endeavouring to protect a *hacienda* from a party of raiding bandits, who killed three other persons in the course of the attack. The murderers fled, but six constables were promptly detailed to pursue them, and—in the usual way of the *Policia Rural*—will probably continue the "assignment" until all the ruffians have been brought to justice or otherwise accounted for. Like the Canadian "Mounties," the members of this gallant little force have a reputation for "getting their man."

THE "SACRED CANNON" OF DJAKARTA

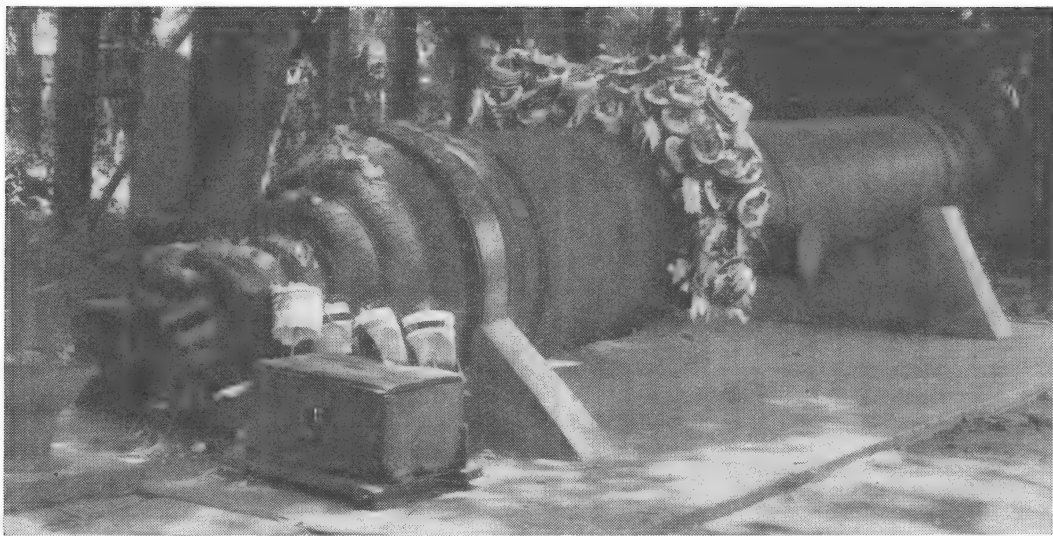
A Liverpool correspondent writes: "Your recent reference to the 'sacred cannon' of Djakarta, Batavia, is most interesting, for only last year I was able to examine it closely, and took the enclosed photograph. The area around old Djakarta was terribly devastated during the late war; even the ancient 'Amsterdam Gate' has disappeared. The gun is located in a wooded cul-de-sac, with native shacks close behind;

Bottle Message for Midlander

A barnacle-covered cider bottle which may have taken four and a half years to drift round the Cape of Good Hope from Karachi to Cornwall, was picked up in St. Ives harbour on the ebb tide.

Inside was a message on a tattered piece of green paper, bearing the date 29-3-49 and stating: "If this bottle reaches England, please give my best wishes (Sawirki) to Mr. J. Brownhill, The Flats, Darlaston, S. Staffs."

Mr. Anthony Hart, of St. Ives, who found the bottle intends to send the message on to Mr. Brownhill.



it is known as the *Kjai Setama*, and figures in many picturesque legends. The weapon is closely associated with two other greatly-venerated guns—the *Njai Setama* at Solo, and another, called *Ki Amuk*, at Banten, both places being in Indonesia. There is another ancient cannon, still on its original wheels, standing in front of the Sultan's *kraton* (palace) in Djokjakarta.

"This particular piece of ordnance is considered to be of Portuguese manufacture, and was captured by the Dutch in Malacca about 1640, after which it vanished from public view, and its movements before reaching its present secluded site are unknown. Nowadays it is visited by many natives, who firmly believe in its magical powers to enable childless couples to raise a family. There is a watchman in attendance to keep the incense-burner alight, and he collects his fees from the locked box seen to the left of the picture. Notice also the offerings laid across the gun. A Latin inscription in the green-tinged bronze at the rear end reads '*Ex me ipsa renate sum*,' which may be roughly translated 'I came forth out of myself.'

"The various 'sacred cannons' have not been 'united,' in accordance with legend, and at present there appears to be little likelihood of such an eventuality. As regards the Penang specimen, although I spent some time there I was unable to locate its whereabouts. It may perhaps have been removed by the Japanese invaders."

THE "ISLAND OF CATS"

Some time ago reference was made to an uninhabited island in the South Seas where, it was alleged, ferocious cats—originally imported by a settler to get rid of a plague of rats—took entire possession, driving out the unfortunate pioneer after making his life impossible. Now a correspondent sends us an article from the *American National Geographic Magazine* de-

scribing a yachting cruise off the coast of Maine, U.S.A., and mentioning another island where, apparently, a very similar state of affairs formerly prevailed. The author states: "We put out boldly across island-strewn Casco Bay, which is reputed to have one island for every day of the year. Passages between them, we found, were often so narrow that the shores were only a fly-cast away.

"Sailing close to attractive Haskell Island, we gave it more than casual attention because of a shuddery chapter in its past. Late in the last century a lobster fisherman named Humphrey lived there. The island was overrun by rats, but the elderly man got along well enough with the rodents, even though they continually raided his bait-barrels.

"One day, however, a passing fisherman noticed the absence of smoke from Humphrey's chimney and landed to investigate. He found the shack swarming with rats; but little remained of their host.

"A first attempt to exterminate the rats failed. Later, two young fishermen, Bruce and Wallace Mills, established themselves on the island, taking along about a dozen husky cats. A war seldom equalled in fury ensued. The cats suffered some initial reverses, but eventually triumphed. Not a rat remained on Haskell.

"The cats, however, multiplied at a great rate and increased in size and ferocity. Although the Mills brothers strove to satisfy the wranglers with fish, birds vanished from the island, their songs succeeded by nocturnal feline yowling.

"Eventually the island was wanted for summer homes, and the Millses were told they were squatters and must leave. Their refusal was supported by their fierce pets until someone put poison ashore at night and wiped out the entire cat population. Heartbroken, the brothers left and were never heard of again."

EXPLORING *the* "SKELETON COAST"

By JOHN BROWN

THE "Skeleton Coast," in South-West Africa, is certainly aptly



named, for there is nothing much to be found there except the wrecks of ships and the bones of men and animals who have ventured into these lonely wastes and paid the penalty for their temerity. The difficulties of travel are terrific; when the liner *Dunedin Star* drove ashore there in 1942 the Government had to spend a fortune to rescue the survivors and bring them out to civilization.

It is the northern part of the Namib Desert, fringing the South Atlantic, which is usually referred to as the Skeleton Coast, and it constitutes one of the most desolate areas on earth. From the mouth of the Orange River right up to the Kunene, eight hundred miles north—the border of Portuguese West Africa—there extend endless rolling sand-dunes, broken only by the diamond-diggings in the "forbidden territory" near the Orange, the diamond-town of Luderitz,

The Author went to the desert country of South-West Africa in search of underground springs. This article describes some of his experiences in that grim land of scorching heat and everlasting sand, where water can be more precious than diamonds.

and the miserable shack-town ports of Walvis and Swakopmund. There is "big money" to be made from pilchard-fishing at Walvis, and from

diamonds on the fields, but nobody stays in the country to spend it; after a brief sojourn in those grim surroundings their sole idea is to get out as quickly as possible. When I was at Walvis, for instance, four men who yearned for the bright lights hired the only available taxi and paid the driver £250 to drive them all the way to Cape Town, about a thousand miles south! Money was no object.

Several fishermen, during the season, had been earning £60 a week, and as income-tax (from the British point of view) is low, strong drink flows like water. Everybody seems wealthy; I have never seen such bulging wallets anywhere else!

I went to the Skeleton Coast in charge of a small survey-party, at the instance of local interests. Our task was to seek underground water-resources with new instruments developed



Sand-dunes on the fringe of the desert.

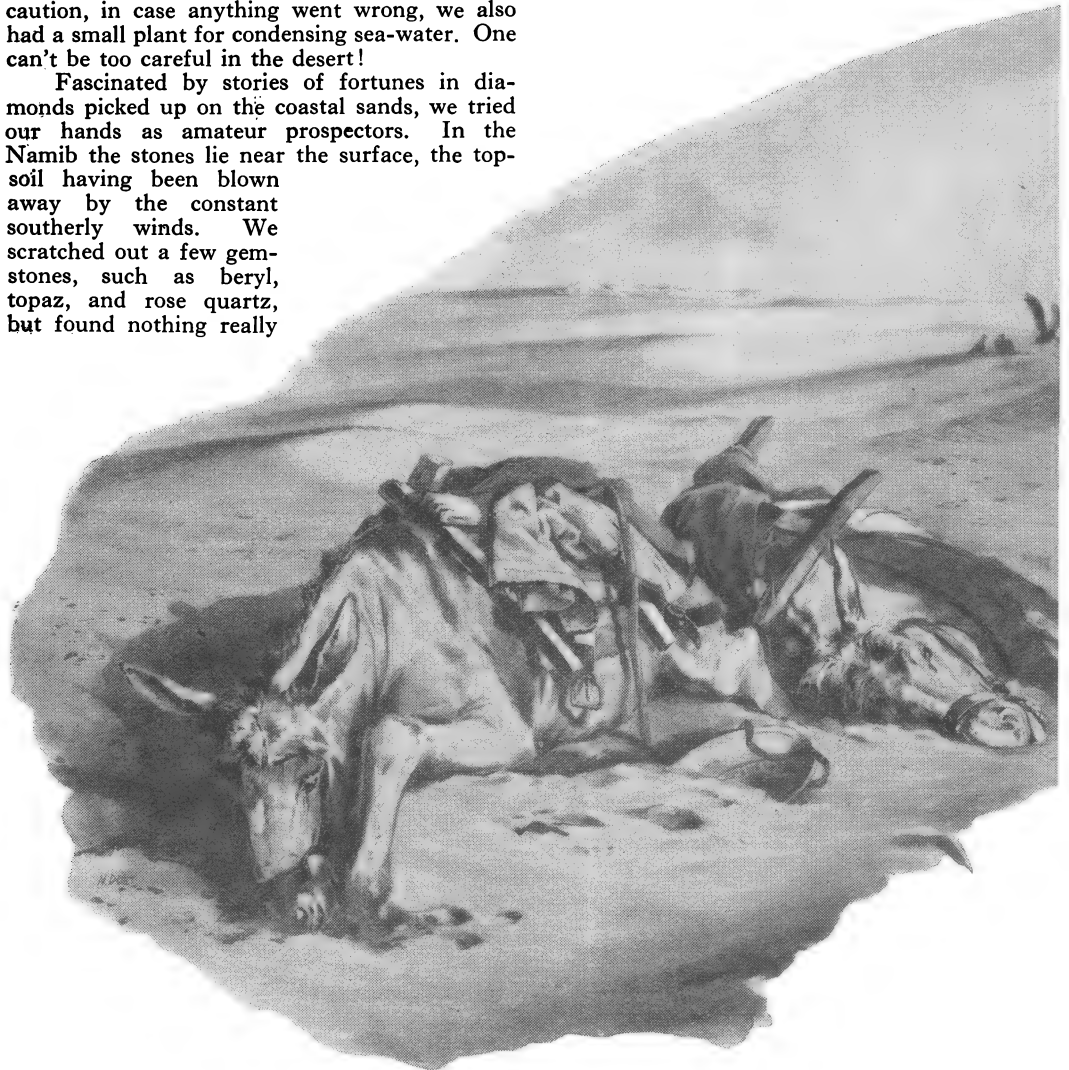
since the late war. Subterranean supplies are all-important in an area where there is no surface-water for eight hundred miles down the coast and throughout vast stretches of inland territory. One can cross South-West Africa and Bechuanaland without coming upon a single river, yet there are great possibilities for ranching development if subterranean springs can be located and tapped by means of boreholes. Every dependable new well would mean about another two thousand acres available for food-production! Rain is practically unknown on the desert, but on the rare occasions when there is a shower the wasteland turns green overnight, the plant-life having the capacity to survive for very long periods.

Finding ourselves none too welcome in the diamondiferous area, where strangers are always regarded with suspicion, we made tracks for the north, using lorries to cross the dunes and taking our water-supply with us. By way of precaution, in case anything went wrong, we also had a small plant for condensing sea-water. One can't be too careful in the desert!

Fascinated by stories of fortunes in diamonds picked up on the coastal sands, we tried our hands as amateur prospectors. In the Namib the stones lie near the surface, the top-soil having been blown away by the constant southerly winds. We scratched out a few gem-stones, such as beryl, topaz, and rose quartz, but found nothing really

valuable. The Kaokoveld area, farther north, is said to be very rich, but this native reserve lies outside the police-zone, and permits to visit it are rarely granted. I am not a geologist, but I suspect that, apart from diamonds, there is plenty of amethyst, for I was shown a lot of high-grade stones from the Kaokoveld mountains.

When we settled to our work we found the conditions very arduous; we were scorched by day and chilled at night by the damp fogbanks which drifted inland after sunset. The nights were terrifyingly dark, and had a bad effect on the nerves of our native porters. The small nocturnal desert animals have a habit of staring at strangers from the edge of the dunes, and the spectacle of red or green eyes shining unwinkingly from a solid wall of blackness is extremely disconcerting, to say the least. Every morning, moreover, there were endless arguments as to

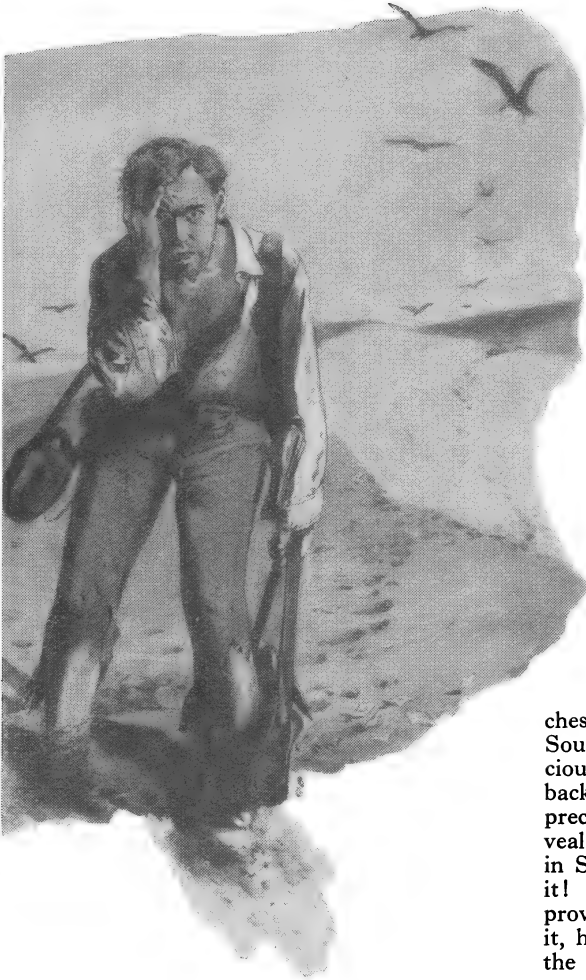


"The poor animals perished from thirst in the dreaded Namib."

the mysterious tracks in the sand all round our camps.

North of Swakopmund a few European hermits contrive to wrest some sort of livelihood from the desert by hacking out lumps of salt from the big "pans" and selling them to the lorry-drivers who call once a month. This is indeed a weird region. Piles of dead pilchards can be found along the shore, and it is difficult to say what kills them. Strange sulphurous odours are occasionally wafted inland, however, and queer variations of sea-temperature have been noted. The most probable explanation of these phenomena is the existence of submarine volcanoes.

We saw no Bushmen aborigines—*Strandlopers*, as they are called—along the coast, but there are many legends about these elusive little



nomads. One was to the effect that a policeman, hearing stories about the *Strandloper* children playing with "shining pebbles," set out to investigate. He never returned.

Some of the hermits we encountered have deliberately cut themselves off from civilization for reasons they keep to themselves, and loneli-

ness has made them decidedly eccentric. One bearded Englishman told me to forget I had met him, whereas a German boasted of his aristocratic connections in Europe. Some of the Germans, incidentally, are still fairly young, although it is hard to tell a man's age when he wears a bushy beard. It would be interesting to discover just when some of them arrived in the country. They were the reverse of communicative, and all attempts to steer the conversation round to the war period were frustrated. It should not be forgotten, in this connection, that until 1916 (when it was conquered by General Botha) the territory was known as "German West," and German is still the language most generally used. Swakopmund and Windhoek, to all appearances, are German towns. Windhoek even boasts a *Goeringstrasse*, although it was explained to us that this was in memory of Hermann Goering's father, a former Commissioner-General of the colony. The South Africans told me that in 1939 the territory was almost solidly pro-Nazi, and in 1940 the people confidently expected the arrival of a German task-force!

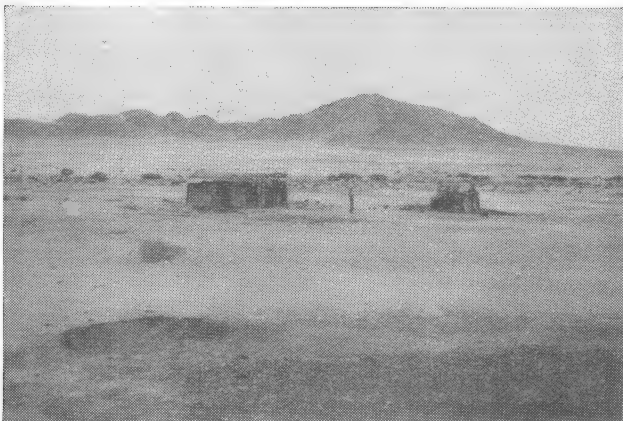
I learned from one Englishman that he was engaged in a most fascinating quest—looking for a treasure hidden by the retreating German forces in 1915. This, he said, had originally been concealed in a grave in the cemetery at Windhoek, a "fake" burial entry being made in the register to cover it. As an additional precaution, a smaller cache, consisting of German currency and a few diamonds, was placed above the main treasure.

After the surrender of Windhoek there was a great deal of confusion, and somebody revealed the hiding-place of the valuables. It was believed, however, that only the top box was removed by the eager searchers; they had no idea that a much larger store lay a few feet farther down.

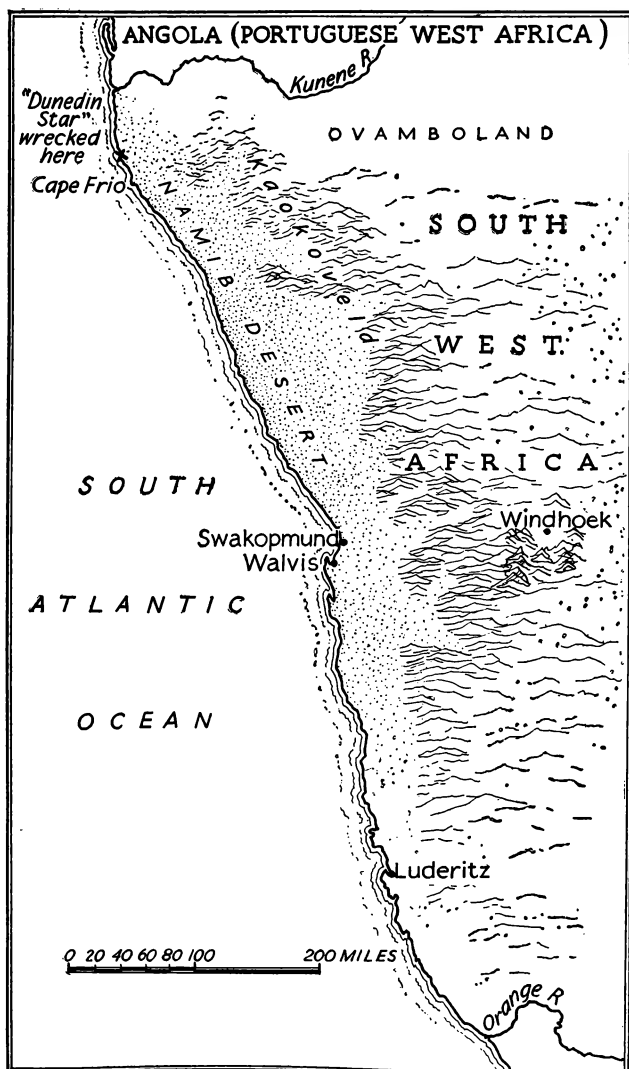
After the Armistice the German officers responsible for burying the treasure-chest found themselves unable to return to South-West Africa in order to retrieve the precious hoard. In 1920, when they contrived to get back, they discovered to their dismay that the precious box had vanished. Discreet inquiries revealed that a German N.C.O., a prisoner of war in South Africa until 1919, had beaten them to it! But, as things fell out, however, the loot proved useless to him. Having secretly recovered it, he headed westward towards the coast, with the treasure loaded on a couple of mules. The poor animals perished from thirst in the dreaded Namib, and the German was forced to bury their packs and continue his journey afoot. Reaching Swakopmund a physical wreck, he died of fever, leaving behind him a letter containing a rough map, showing the approximate location of the treasure, to be sent to his brother in Germany. The man to whom this letter was en-

trusted failed to forward it, and later the map was stolen from him; evidently he had talked too much! Eventually the document came into the hands of my informant, and formed the basis of his search, which had so far been unsuccessful.

I also heard an entirely different version as to what happened to this German "graveyard" treasure, but it is impossible to say where the truth lies. It seems fairly certain, however, that such a cache *was* made, and the main parcel, believed to consist of selected diamonds from Luderitz, was probably of great value. Nothing has ever been heard, moreover, as to what became of a chest full of English sovereigns and gold twenty-mark



A hermit's shack in the wilds.



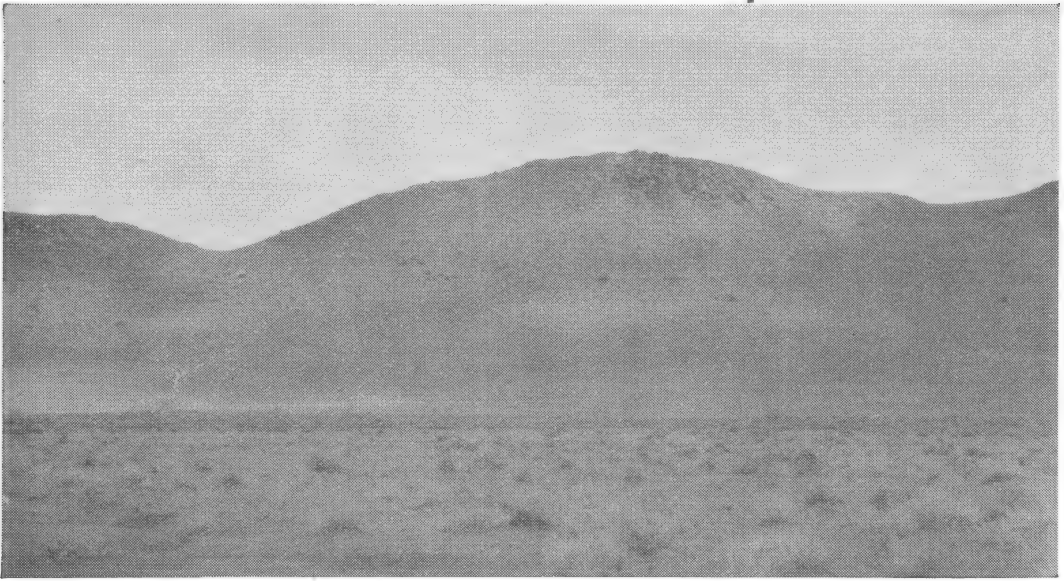
Map of the "Skeleton Coast," showing the various places mentioned.

pieces, used for border trade and espionage payments.

Many of the Skeleton Coast hermits exist under conditions of frightful squalor; they are bearded and long-haired, and clad in rags and tatters. There is little community spirit among them; they quarrel fiercely and cherish all sorts of fantastic feuds and grievances. Some of them, if you are prepared to listen, are eager to tell you about the days when they were "in the money," and occasionally the stories are true. One tale we regarded as most improbable—that a certain horse-dealer was related to a Scottish duke—proved to be perfectly correct!

These exiles of the wilds do not welcome the intrusion of strangers. One morning, when we had unloaded our instruments and were running out the cable, a typical hermit, after watching us sullenly for some time, suddenly shouted angrily: "I know what you're after! Why can't you leave us in peace?" He appeared extremely annoyed, warning us that his neighbour had a gun and would not hesitate to use it on us. We entirely failed to convince him that we were not prospectors, but merely seeking underground streams. Instruments meant only one thing to that man—a hunt for minerals. Finally, greatly incensed, he went off to enlist support, and we decided to move on. The hermits might not love one another, but they liked us even less, and if they chose to join forces against us things might well become awkward.

Farther north we heard some queer stories concerning the ivory-poachers who come down from Angola and lurk in the jungle wilderness



The desolate hills of the interior, sterile and featureless.

above the Kunene. This area is a real No-Man's-Land—a place where strange things happen and it isn't healthy to be too inquisitive.

When, in the course of our investigations, we turned eastwards, we were offered jobs in the mining camps at £75 a month! I suppose the mine-owners are well able to pay such wages, for while we were there we heard about the recent discovery of tantalite-columbite, a rare mineral said to be worth over £3,000 a ton! In these remote regions nobody bothers about "references"; if the employer likes the look of you he takes you on. Life in the mining communities is strenuous but exhilarating; the prospectors and engineers are grand fellows; there is plenty of game about, and lofty mountains to climb if you feel like stretching your legs—a welcome change from the everlasting sun-scorched desert.

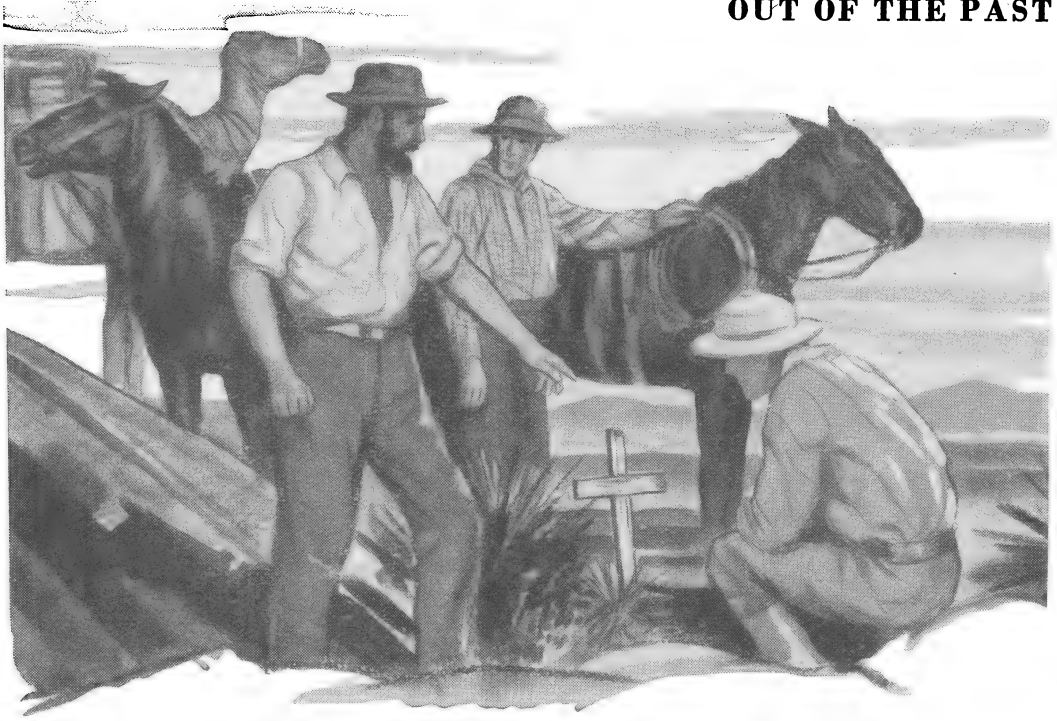
This part of Africa is still a land of romance, where the chance wayfarer is always welcome to a meal and a share of the camp-fire. Round those camp-fires, incidentally, we heard some amazing stories of "lost" diamond mines,

cities buried beneath the sand, and expeditions that never returned.

I have deliberately said little about our search for new water-sources; the subject is too technical to be of general interest. Suffice it to say that we found some indications in the central area of the Namib, and many traces in the Kalahari, of water lying from thirty to fifty feet below the surface, or even deeper. Though the land is unsuitable for agriculture, boreholes would make ranching possible with tough Afrikander stock.

Having concluded our mission, we packed up our equipment and returned home, leaving the Skeleton Coast and its deserts behind us. Now, faced with the complexities of our present-day civilization, I occasionally find myself envying those hardy hermits of the wilds. Grim though certain aspects of their existence may be, they have nevertheless achieved some sort of happiness. The recurrent "crises" of the restless outside world don't worry them, they get up when they like, and they call no man master!





"The graves of unfortunates who perished from thirst."

DEAD MEN'S TRACKS

II

T



HE opening instalment related how the Author's brother Jim met, on the Coolgardie goldfield, two men named Rod McLeod and Patrick Maddison, who befriended him. Maddison became involved in a fight with a ruffianly pugilist called Cooney, and later, while discussing a proposed expedition in search of a lost gold-mine the trio were overheard by one of Cooney's friends. They duly set off on their enterprise, but some days afterwards were surprised to come across the fresh trail of mounted men proceeding in the same direction as themselves. YOU CAN NOW READ ON.

One of the most helpful features of a new goldfield is the enterprising way in which storekeepers follow up the diggers and keep them supplied with food and—let it be said—with strong liquor. A supply of beer and whisky is one of the first requirements of a new Australian gold-

By W. CHARNLEY

An exciting story from Western Australia. Following dead men's footsteps in search of a lost mine! This was the quest on which the Author's brother set forth into the unknown, and it involved him in a strange and perilous sequence of adventures. Mr. Charnley is himself a veteran prospector, and has been over much of the ground described in the narrative.

rush, and it is never very long before it appears.

Thus, when one day Rod gave a half-cheer and waved his arm towards a canvas building a mile or so ahead, I was not surprised to learn that it was a sort of bush hotel where several tracks crossed. Here we could replenish our water-tanks and also obtain a drink of something stronger.

As we drew near the place I noticed, with

some little surprise, that three rather scraggy "brumbies" were tied to a couple of dead trees which served as hitching-posts.



"Yes; I see them," said Rod, when I pointed them out. "They belong to those fellows we've been following, so we shall soon find out who they are!"

A few minutes later we drew up in front of the shanty and, after *Hoosta*-ing the camels down to their knees, trooped into the bar for a drink.

We had rather wondered why the shanty-keeper had not come out to meet us, for travellers were not so plentiful that he was likely to be indifferent to new arrivals. On passing through the door, however, we saw that he was busy guarding his small stock and attending to the demands of three as likely-looking ruffians as could be found anywhere.

The one that caught my eye first was Cooney, the heavyweight ex-pugilist with the "cauliflower" ear whom I had already come to know so well. The next was the gentleman with the wild eye who had spied on us as we discussed our plans in Maddison's room. The third I knew only by sight, having observed him on several occasions loafing around Coolgardie. I knew nothing against him, yet I have no doubt that he felt quite at home in jail.

As we breasted the rough bar, however, we gave no sign of recognition, but, calling for drinks—which consisted of whisky diluted with cold water from a water-bag—we kept to ourselves.

Evidently this did not please Mr. Cooney, and, when Rod asked for a second round of drinks he lurched up and roughly demanded if we were going to "shout."

Rod looked him up and down coolly; then he curtly answered "No!"

Whether he was wise in refusing I cannot say, but it certainly gave the fellow an excuse to quarrel. But Rod was like that—he feared neither man nor beast.

"Very well, then," roared the other, "you keep your drinks and be ——" There followed a string of oaths and insults.

Rod remained completely unruffled, but calmly sipped his whisky and water.

Getting no change from Rod, Cooney suddenly turned on Maddison.

"Why! Here's the —— English Johnny who hit me in Coolgardie!" he cried, in simulated astonishment. "That was a good fight, and now's our chance to finish it!"

Maddison paled slightly, which was no discredit to him for, despite his high courage, he was undoubtedly no match for this heavyweight professional in a knock-out fight.

But the issue was not to be left with him.

"No; you don't," put in Rod, firmly. "You're not going to force a fight on my mates!"

Cooney stepped back a pace. "If you mean to save him," he snarled, "you'll have to take the hiding yourself."

With that he launched a vicious punch at Rod's jaw.

McLeod was on the alert, however, and, leaping to one side, cleverly avoided the blow. And then the battle began! Rod, as I have already mentioned, was a fine big fellow, accustomed to a hard, open-air life, and although he lacked his opponent's pugilistic science he was quite his equal in toughness and capacity to take punishment. As the couple exchanged blows the thuds of fists on muscle sounded almost continuous. Then came a clinch, and they heaved across the narrow bar, crashing into the frail counter and breaking it down.

"Hey! Stop it! Go and fight outside!" yelled the alarmed shanty-keeper. Spluttering despairing oaths, he danced around and endeavoured to put an end to the struggle that threatened to wreck the frail building. But the fighters paid no heed as, breaking from the clinch, they fell to sparring for the knock-out.

Maddison and I stepped back into a corner to be out of the way, while Cooney's two companions found it convenient to take up a position in the doorway. I half-expected that they might attempt to help their mate by some underhand trick, such as throwing a bottle at Rod, but they made no such effort, being apparently quite confident of Cooney's ability to take care of himself.

That the ex-pugilist *could* do so was quite evident, even to my inexperienced eyes. At the beginning I had imagined wild fury flashed from his eyes, but now, as he and Rod sparred and punched and clinched backwards and forwards across the narrow room, I began to fancy that the rage had abated, and to be replaced by a sort of sardonic humour. In fact, he began playing with Rod.

This, of course, was very humiliating for our champion; still, looked at in a cold light, it was only what might be expected. Cooney had

probably fought hundreds of times, both in the ring and as a sparring partner to better men than himself, and, brave and strong as Rod was, he had no possible chance against a professional.

Time after time Rod's powerful left, aimed at an apparently vulnerable jaw, impacted with disastrous effect to himself on his opponent's thick skull. Nor did a following upper-cut help any further towards victory. Cooney's left would be there to guard, whilst his right, jabbing short into Rod's ribs, made the latter gasp.

Thus the fight went on for probably a quarter of an hour or more. Only tough men could have stood it, for there was no pause for rounds or time to gather breath. The shanty-keeper still yelled and cursed as he beheld ruin piling on ruin; his great regret appeared to be that he did not possess a gun with which to shoot the combatants. Quite likely he *did* have a gun somewhere handy, but, as I happened to be carrying a Winchester, he was not game to produce and use it.

The end of the battle came quite suddenly, Cooney seemed to sight something through the open doorway, and, as if he had received a signal, he jumped close in and, breaking through Rod's guard, planted a terrific blow right over his heart. Then, as our mate staggered, he struck again—this time at the jaw—and Rod collapsed in a senseless heap on the floor.

What did we do? Nothing. The fight had been fairly fought, and the best man had won.

FOOLED!

Without a word Cooney picked up his hat and went out.

Down on our knees on the earthen floor, Maddison and I had an anxious few minutes with Rod, fanning him and gently massaging his heart. I thought at first that the solar plexus punch had done him some serious injury, but after a while he opened his eyes and presently began to smile in a rueful manner.

"A nice fighter, ain't I?" was his first remark. "Help me outside. I want some air."

So, with an arm on each side, we helped him out of the hot canvas shanty. Then we saw something that made our eyes bulge; even Rod temporarily forgot his troubles. Our three camels were still kneeling where we had left them, but the lashings of the packs had been cut and our supplies were strewn all over the ground!

"Robbery!" gasped Rod. "That quarrel was a trick! What a fool I was to be led into a fight!"

Going over to the camels, we saw how we had been deceived. Evidently, as Rod said, the quarrel had been a well-planned scheme to rob us of our stores. While Cooney, confident of victory, fought inside and purposely prolonged the contest, his fellow-rascals, after waiting a few minutes, had slipped away unperceived to their job of looting our packs. Working quickly but thoroughly, they had taken everything they fancied; then, stowing the lot into a couple of sacks, they had loaded up Maddison's horses as

pack-animals, mounted their own brumbies, and trotted away.

Already they were out of sight. We could do nothing; any attempt at pursuit with our slow-moving camels would have been futile. Quite likely the rascals had planned the whole thing away back in Coolgardie. They had evidently known the road we intended to take and, following on horses—probably stolen—had kept in touch with us until the time came to execute their *coup*. Even in the midst of our chagrin the grim humour of the thing tickled us, and we had to admit we were a trio of fools.

Reckoning up our losses, we soon discovered that the most serious items were a Winchester rifle and Rod's own particular "swag." The losing of the Winchester was unfortunate, but luckily I had been carrying the other, or matters might have been worse. Probably we should have been obliged to turn back, since it would have been sheer folly to venture into the territory of hostile blacks without at least one good weapon.

As to Rod's swag, it contained the map of our intended route, with indications of possible water-supplies, which he had drawn as a guide for Maddison and myself in case anything untoward happened to himself. That this map should fall into the hands of Cooney and his fellow-ruffians was positively disastrous, for, as Rod remarked, if they possessed any bushmanship at all it would be sufficient to guide them straight to the reef we were in search of.

"But they'll never get there," was Rod's final comment. "They won't be able to find enough water to carry them along. If they'd had any sense they'd have taken one of our water-tanks along with the other stuff."

He was right, as events proved before many days had passed.

Gathering our remaining gear together, we spliced the cut ropes and, after replenishing our water-tanks, bade the shanty-keeper good-bye and struck out into the desert.

I say "desert" advisedly, because from there on the country rapidly became drier, the scrub and gnarled trees more stunted, until, on the next day, we came to great plains covered with spinifex. This spinifex—sometimes called "porcupine grass"—is one of Nature's wonders. Seen at a short distance it looks a pleasant-enough tussock, but nearer examination shows that it consists of short dry spikes with very sharp points.

To all appearances it is dead, and can be kicked into a heap and burnt as a bonfire at once. The roots show no signs of sap or moisture, yet the plant is alive and—given even a moderate shower of rain—will shoot up coarse blades which very soon produce a more or less full seed-head. This seed the aborigines gather and grind into flour with which they make a sort of bread.

Travelling through spinifex is hard work, and since it invariably grows on sandy plains the chance of finding water is usually remote. That tribes of blacks can exist amongst such surround-

ings is explainable by the fact that they know of certain *gnamma* water-holes, the locality of which they keep secret. However, a good bushman like Rod, by keeping an eye open for tracks, can quite often locate these native wells despite all aborigine efforts to cover them up.

The above explanation will indicate the kind of country into which Cooney and his mates had foolishly plunged. On the evening of the fourth day after leaving the shanty we came on some barren ridges of ironstone and quartz. Topping the crest of one of these I saw, in the gully below, some gleaming white bones.

"The skeleton of the horse," explained Rod, as we drew up alongside the grim relics. "The bag of specimens is buried just here. I'll dig some up and let you judge for yourselves."

A minute's work with the shovel brought some sacking to light and, tearing a hole in the slowly rotting fabric, Rod pulled out several lumps of quartz. Never have I seen richer samples; the stone seemed to be matted together with pure gold. No wonder the thirst-stricken horse had fallen and died under such a weight! "Greed of gold!" was the thought that flashed through my mind. This unfortunate prospector had indeed given his life for it; with empty saddle-bags his mount might have carried him to Kurnalpi and water.

That night, just before sunset, Rod showed us a thin column of smoke rising some few miles away. "That's them," he remarked, grimly, "they're beginning to get thirsty, and they're not game to get too far ahead of us."

The following day we left the shores of a great dry lake. These dry lakes are a remarkable feature of Western Australia. Whether they were, at no very distant geological time, full of fresh water, giving life and verdure to what is now desert, or whether they are merely bays and creeks of some ancient sea, is an open question. But lakes they undoubtedly were at one time; even now one can trace the old shore-line and find tall cliffs scarped and water-worn by the long-vanished waves.

On the top of one such cliff lay a water-hole that was clearly marked on Rod's map, and as we pulled up to water our camels we saw by recent horse-droppings that Cooney's gang had not long preceded us.

"This will enable them to carry on for another couple of days," said Rod, "but it will go hard with them if the next water-hole happens to be dry."

WHEN WATER MEANS LIFE

Three nights later we camped at that particular hole, and it *was* dry. We spent a good deal of time in digging it deeper, but although the earth was moist, not a trickle of water appeared.

"Good-bye, Mr. Cooney!" muttered Rod, as he straightened his back and wiped the muddy sweat from his face. "From now on there is a thirty-five-mile dry stage, with probably no water in the rock-hole at the end of it."

Thirty-five miles was a two-days' journey

for our pack-camels, and during that time we saw no signs of Cooney and his mates. Evidently they had noted the dry stage marked on Rod's map, and pushing their horses, were hoping to get through to water ahead. What they thought when, like ourselves, they found the rock-hole dry I can only guess. Wiser men would have turned back and made for the water left behind. We, of course, with our camels and water-tanks, were quite all right, and could travel on for another three or four days before our beasts really needed a drink.

"The next water may be ten or a hundred miles ahead," was Rod's opinion. "Anyway, we shall come on the lake country again before long, and there one always stands a chance of picking up water."

The following night we camped on a flat sandy reach where, ages ago, the water of the lake had ebbed and flowed. Now, however, it was as dry as the floor of a lime-kiln; even the spinifex had failed to gain a footing. All next day we struggled across the sandy bed of that primeval sea. It was a most trying march, and as we trudged along, our feet sinking through the salty crust to the fine sand beneath, I felt as though we three were lone wayfarers lost for ever on a dead world.

The heat was almost unbearable, and although, at times, we passed close to cliffs and rocks which cast inviting shadows, we dared not pause, even for a minute, lest the tired and thirsty camels should lie down and give us the labour and worry of getting them up and on the move again.

The water in our tanks became quite hot and nauseous to drink, but Rod would not allow us to fill a water-bag (which would have given us a cool drink) on account of the inevitable loss through evaporation and the uncertainty as to where we were likely to find a fresh supply.

What had become of Cooney and his mates we could only conjecture. Their tracks no longer ran on ahead of us, as they had done previously, so we began to think they must have pulled out of the game and were now making their way back to Coolgardie. I should explain here that we were following a distinct trail—that which Rod and his old mate Bill Flynn had made when they first followed, and then returned, on the dead prospector's track.

Such tracks, in dry, sandy country, will last for years, and Rod was able to point out the still-visible hoof-prints of the dead man's horse where, in places, they had deviated from a straight line and so escaped being trampled over. With such a trail as a guide it was obvious that Cooney and Co., given sufficient water, could easily outstrip and forestall us at the golden lake, even without Rod's map.

We discussed all these things as we went along, but Rod remained confident that the camels would never get through without camels and water-tanks.

"And they won't get them," he concluded, "unless they try to take ours."

That day's march ended at a curious spot

where a big stone hill, with precipitous sides, rose straight up from the lake bottom. In by-gone ages it had been an island and, tired as I was, my insatiable curiosity prompted me to climb to the summit. The height was about thirty feet, and after a fairly hard scramble I reached the top.

The view was wonderful. Far back stretched the way we had come—dry and sandy, with heat-waves dancing even before the setting sun. Ahead of us the white, salt-encrusted lake-bed seemed to stretch on endlessly. The old shore-line, which I could easily trace, wound into bays and promontories, and I could readily picture the time when this had been a glorious inland sea. But although my imagination wandered I was not quite lost to reality, and suddenly I became interested in something which moved on the high cliff about half a mile away.

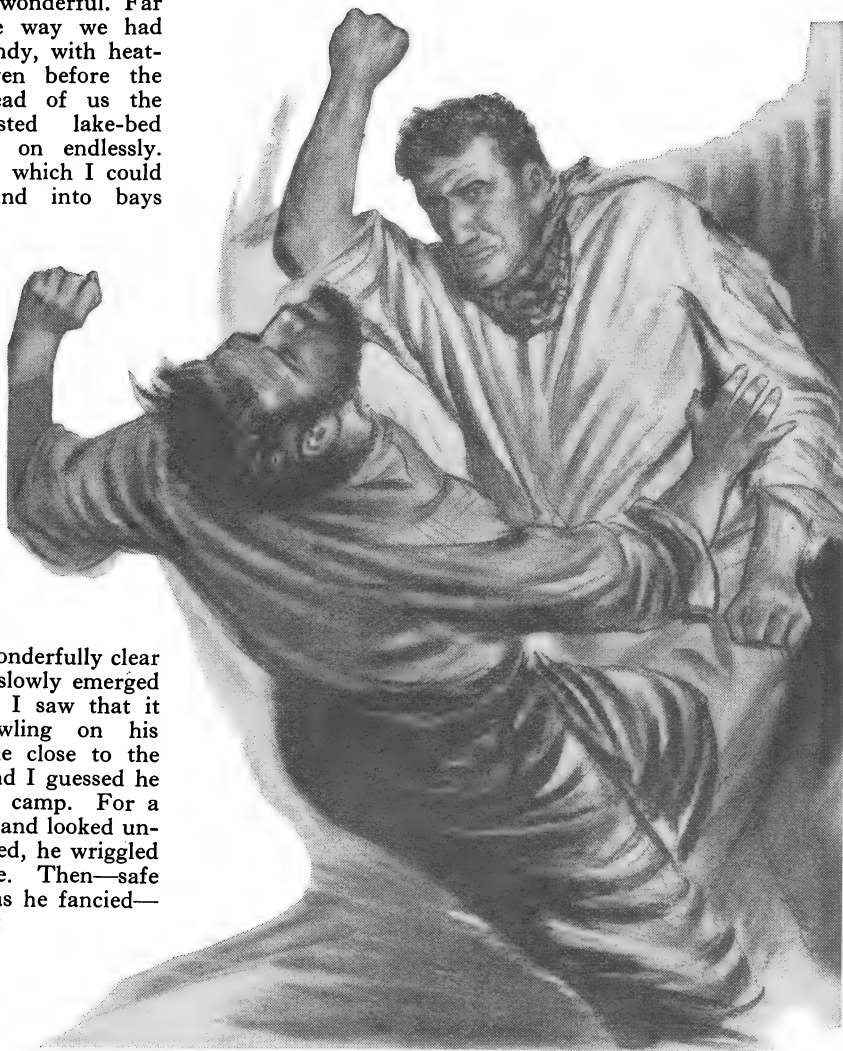
The air was wonderfully clear and, as the object slowly emerged from a depression, I saw that it was a man crawling on his stomach. He came close to the edge of the cliff, and I guessed he was spying on our camp. For a few minutes he lay and looked until, evidently satisfied, he wriggled back from the edge. Then—safe from observation, as he fancied—he rose to his feet and walked away, and I saw it was none other than Cooney.

Hastily climbing down, I told Rod what I had seen.

"Let 'em all come!" was his laconic comment as, opening a tin of meat, he proceeded to concoct the inevitable stew with the aid of desiccated potatoes and tinned carrots. After a good meal of "damper" and stew, washed down with a strong brew of black tea, we sat a while by the dying fire enjoying a contemplative smoke. The night was moonless, yet in a cloudless sky the myriads of stars gave enough light to make surrounding objects faintly visible. Lying on my rugs, I waited for the chill of the night to descend. Soon I fell asleep.

THE NIGHT ATTACK

I was awakened startlingly by a shot. I knew it was a shot, because another and yet another followed in quick succession. Then came shouts, oaths, the sound of men rushing and stumbling in the darkness, and another series of



"Rod collapsed in a senseless heap."

shots, followed by the noise of running feet. After that, silence reigned again save where, close to the dark forms of the kneeling camels, a darker something on the ground sobbed and gurgled and made curious sounds.

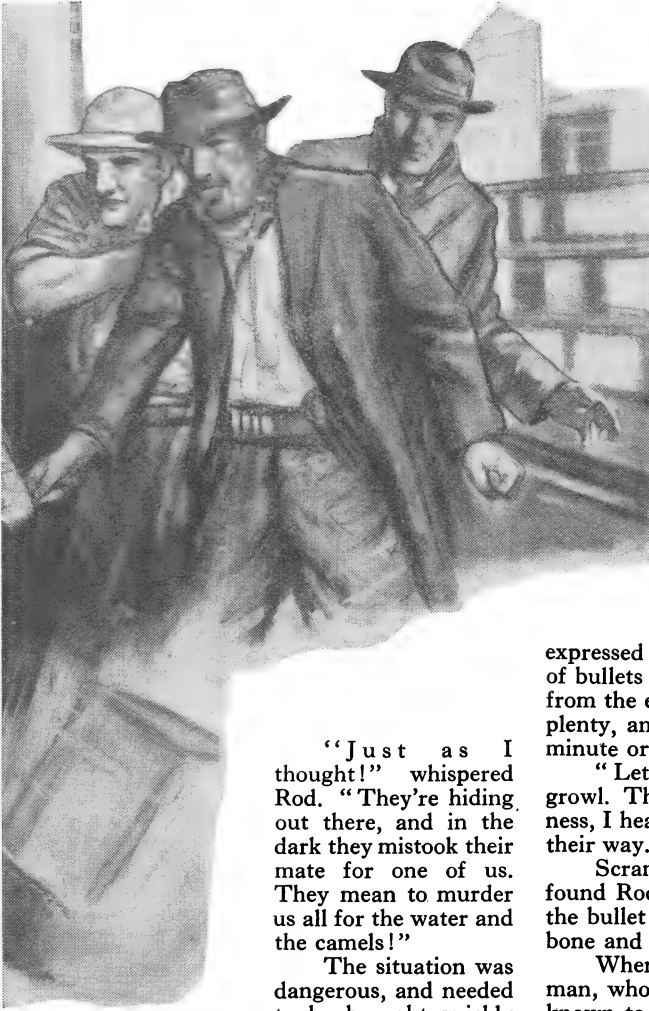
I flung off my blanket and made to rise, but a hand gripped me firmly from behind. "Lie still," came Rod's stern whisper. "They may be just around the corner of the rocks waiting for us to show up."

Tensely the minutes ticked by as, crouched low, we waited and listened.

After a while the poor wretch who moaned

over near the camels struggled unsteadily to his feet and staggered towards us.

"Water, water!" I could hear him whisper. But, as Rod had expected, a shot rang out from around the corner of the cliff, and the luckless fellow thudded to the ground again, where he lay silent.



"Just as I thought!" whispered Rod. "They're hiding out there, and in the dark they mistook their mate for one of us. They mean to murder us all for the water and the camels!"

The situation was dangerous, and needed to be brought quickly to an end. We did not know just what firearms our assailants possessed, but they certainly had one of our Winchesters, while we had to depend on the other and my handy Colt. So far Rod had held off the attack with the Winchester, with which weapon he was a crack shot, while Maddison had peppered them with my revolver.

Rod told me briefly that while I lay asleep he and Maddison had kept watch, in full expectation of trouble. The gang had come round the end of the rock with a quick rush, evidently expecting to find us asleep and easy victims. Rod had fired the first shot, bringing down the fellow who lay near the camels. This had halted the other two and, after emptying their guns to-

wards where we lay, they hastily retreated. Maddison, it seemed, had received a bullet through the arm, although he said little about it.

"What are you going to do?" I asked, when Rod had finished his explanation.

"Wait for daylight, I expect. But if I knew just where they were hiding I'd have a try to root them out right away."

The side of the rock where we lay was precipitous and unclimbable, save for a sort of broken chimney which seemed to give a bare chance of reaching the top.

Attempting to scale this in the dark held a fair prospect of broken limbs, but it was quite safe from stray bullets; so, after a word with Rod, I started up. It was not an easy climb, and it was only at the expense of many cuts and bruises that I reached the summit. The area of the rock was not great, and after a little scouting I located our attackers in a nook close beneath. My instructions from Rod were to return to him with the information, but I felt so safe in my airy situation that I could not resist dropping a few stones on to the rascals below.

The pebbles—which, luckily for them, were not very big—took them completely by surprise, and with blood-curdling oaths they expressed their opinion of the thrower. A fusillade of bullets whistled up at me, but I was well back from the edge and out of range. Stones I had in plenty, and selecting some larger ones, within a minute or two I had them beaten.

"Let's get out of this!" I heard Cooney growl. Then, as they rushed away into the darkness, I heard Rod's Winchester speeding them on their way.

Scrambling down the chimney again, I found Rod bandaging Maddison's arm. Luckily the bullet had passed clean through, missing the bone and leaving only a flesh-wound.

When daylight came we examined the dead man, who proved to be the fellow who was unknown to me.

"Poor devil!" remarked Maddison. "He has paid the penalty, anyway."

"I suppose they were perishing for water," commented Rod, thoughtfully. "If they had come openly, like men, and asked for some I wouldn't have refused, but, being criminals, they just couldn't act decently."

After burying the body in a shallow grave we pushed on again.

Late that afternoon the whiteness of the lake bottom gradually turned to red sand and, scarcely noticing the almost imperceptible rise in the level, we found ourselves trudging through granite and ironstone country scantily clothed with ti-tree and gnarled salmon gum. This was much better than either spinifex or lake-bottom,

and we pressed on hopefully, since Rod promised a *gnamma* hole ahead where, with reasonable luck, we should be able to give our thirsty camels a drink. The poor beasts had now been without water for seven days, and although by no means at the limit of their endurance they were showing signs of fatigue.

We reached the *gnamma* hole at sundown, and were disgusted to find that it held less than two inches of horrible fluid in which some animal, either a kangaroo or a dingo, had died and decomposed!

"Dig it out," suggested Rod, and forthwith I attacked the filthy mess with a shovel, putting in a couple of hours' solid work. In the end we secured enough water to give our camels a drink.

"I wonder what has become of our friends?" remarked Maddison at breakfast next morning. We made several guesses, but none of them, as after events proved, was correct.

That day's tramp was like many previous marches, spinifex, sand, plain, ti-tree scrub, and lake-bottom being met with in turn.

The following day we came once again to the main floor of the lake, where it made a twist in its hundred-mile stretch. Somewhere about noon we discovered a man's footprint—the clear impression of a naked foot.

"Blackfellow?" I hazarded.

Rod examined the print closely where it had pressed into some firm sand.

"No," he answered. "White man. And most likely he was all in."

THE FIRST VICTIM

Swinging the camels round, we started to follow the tracks, Rod going on ahead at a quick pace. About a mile farther on we found our man. He lay face downwards where he had fallen in his last shuffling step, and his naked body was horribly burnt and blistered by the sun.

Turning him over, we looked at his face. It was dreadfully swollen and distorted, but still recognizable, and we identified him as Cooney's second companion—the fellow who had spied on us through the hole in the canvas.

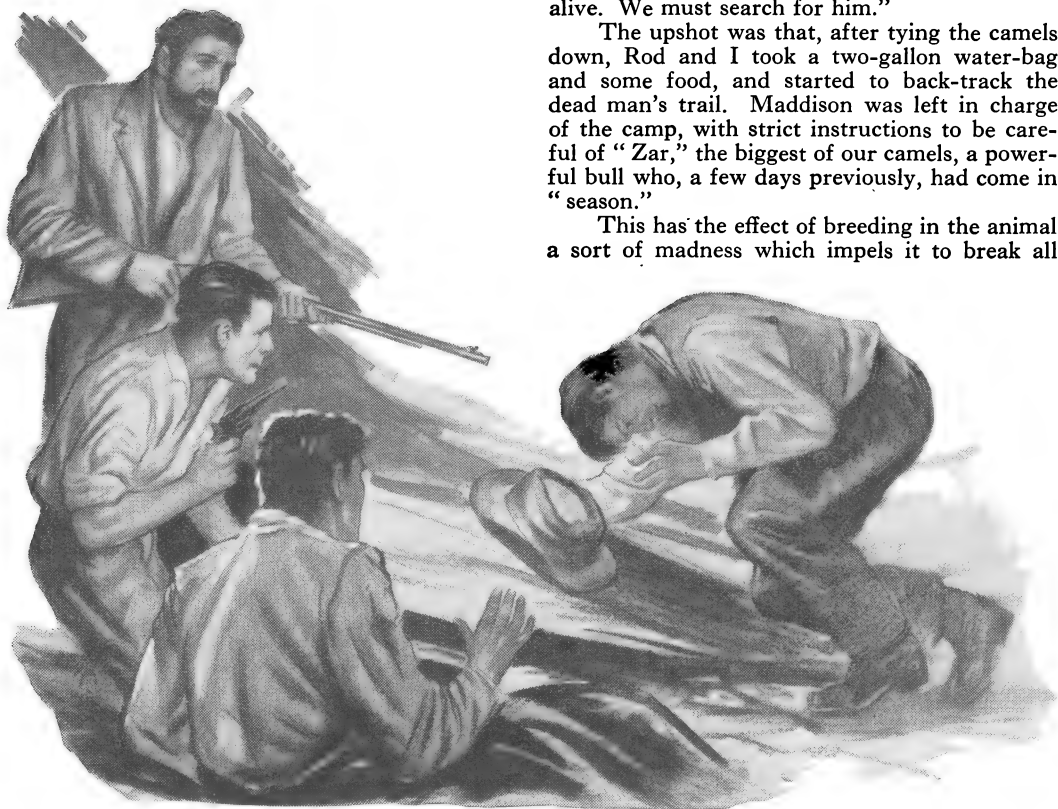
Maddison was terribly shocked at the sight. Like most other goldfielders, he had heard that men dying of thirst usually stripped themselves naked in their last dreadful agony, but he had regarded such tales with suspicion until he encountered the horrible reality. We could do nothing except take our shovels and put the poor remains underground. When alive this ruffian had robbed and attempted to murder us, yet Maddison could find regret for his untimely end.

Rod headed the camels for the nearest shore of the lake and, camping beside a patch of scrub, we held a council.

"It's a hard thing to do," Rod began, "but after all, Cooney is a fellow-creature, and we can't leave him to perish if he happens to be still alive. We must search for him."

The upshot was that, after tying the camels down, Rod and I took a two-gallon water-bag and some food, and started to back-track the dead man's trail. Maddison was left in charge of the camp, with strict instructions to be careful of "Zar," the biggest of our camels, a powerful bull who, a few days previously, had come in "season."

This has the effect of breeding in the animal a sort of madness which impels it to break all



"The luckless fellow thudded to the ground."

bonds and travel immense distances in search of a mate. So, to be sure of our camels on this occasion, we did not hobble them out, but tied them down with ropes and pegs, just as one fastens a tent.

Thus we reckoned that Maddison would be all right, although he was still suffering from his wounded arm.

Slinging the water-bag and our pack on a light stick which we carried between us, Rod and I strode along at a good pace. The track was easy enough to follow, and after a few miles we began to come upon items of the poor wretch's clothing. First we found a flannel shirt, and then, farther along, his trousers. Miles farther back we discovered his boots and later, just on dusk, his hat. As we were travelling light and fast we had brought no blankets, so, scratching a hole in the sand, blackfellow fashion, we lay snug enough until daybreak.

Resuming our search, we came across a dry and empty water-bag which had been the first item the perishing man had thrown away. Our late enemy had travelled a long way in his hopeless search for water, and it was well on towards night before we reached the spot where he and Cooney had parted.

THE LAST OF COONEY

Cooney was there, lying on his back—dead. Some food and an empty water-bag lay on the ground beside him; our Winchester rifle and a revolver were some ten feet away. The rifle had been fired, and it was evident from a ghastly hole in his head that the bullet had killed Cooney.

We could read the signs easily enough, and concluded that Cooney's mate had treacherously murdered him to obtain possession of their last pint of water! Then, by an easily-made error, the murderer had turned the wrong way and, instead of making back towards water, had headed farther into the desert—to his own death.

On a thorny bush close by hung Cooney's coat, and when we searched the pockets to see if we could discover any clue to his real identity, we were rather surprised to find, wrapped in oiled silk, the photograph of a woman. It was that of the beautiful barmaid of Coolgardie! On the back, in a fine feminine hand, was written: "With love to Dan." That was all, but probably those words gave the key to a tragic romance. Perhaps, at the zenith of his fame as a pugilist, she had loved the man—or thought she did. Who can tell?

We could find no sign of Cooney's horses or our own; they had probably wandered away in search of water. So, retrieving our rifle and the revolver, we retraced our steps.

It was late next day when we again sighted our camp. Coming nearer, I gave a loud "Coo-ee," expecting that Maddison was perhaps asleep. But no one appeared. Then Rod noticed that only two camels were in sight and, becoming apprehensive, we began to hurry. Reaching the camp we discovered that both

"Zar," the big camel, and Maddison had disappeared.

"The brute must have shaken himself free and bolted, and Maddison has gone after him," was Rod's explanation.

This was obviously the case. The big camel had always shown a wild disposition and a tendency to recognize nobody but Rod as his master, and evidently, when the latter left the camp, he had considered the time opportune for a bolt. To tear his lashing was a comparatively easy matter, since a bull camel in "season" seems to possess double the strength of normal periods. Anyway, he had gone and Maddison with him, so, after refilling our water-bag, we set out again.

It would be useless to relate in detail our weary search for our companion. Suffice it to say that we followed his and the camel's tracks until darkness prevented us from seeing farther; then, camping on the spot, we slept until the first gleam of the rising sun enabled us to continue. Ultimately we found Maddison lying unconscious at the foot of a rotten sandstone cliff.

He was in rather a bad way, having lain there since early the previous day exposed to the blazing sun and without a drop of water. His tongue and lips were so swollen that at first we had to feed water to him with a spoon. But he soon recovered sufficiently to take a good drink, after which he declared that, with the exception of a twisted knee, he was all right.

His mishap had come about quite simply. Much of the rock in this dry, rainless country is thoroughly rotten, yet it will hang in position for years. Maddison had carelessly walked too close to the edge of the cliff, with disastrous results. He was now unable even to stand, and getting him to camp was a problem which could only be solved by one of us returning and bringing along a camel. This unenviable task naturally fell to Rod, and without a murmur he started off.

Before daybreak next morning he returned, having travelled the whole time without a rest. Then, while I took Maddison into camp, he lay down in the shade of a rock and slept. Later in the day he followed us in.

Our next move was back to the nearest *gnamma* hole, where Rod decided that Maddison and I should camp while he went in pursuit of the truant "Zar." Personally I thought that he had very little chance of overtaking the beast, but I was wrong, for after more than a week's absence he duly returned with the runaway in tow.

Riding on "Sind," one of the other camels, he had followed "Zar's" tracks for close on ninety miles until he came up with the beast in a gully, where some dried grass and *quong-quongs* (native peaches) had tempted him to stop and feed.

Then, with our little train once more complete, and Maddison nearly recovered, we started off again to seek the lost gold-mine. Maddison, we found, could not walk very far, so as punishment for his truancy, "Zar" was made to carry him in addition to most of his usual load.

(To be concluded)

The WIDE WORLD BROTHERHOOD

FOR NEW READERS

HERE is a most interesting letter from a sergeant in the Canadian Army, describing how he first came in contact with the W.W.B. and the reasons which eventually made him decide to join our fraternity. We commend it to the consideration of every reader who has hitherto imagined, like Sergt. Carrier, that the Brotherhood is "not for me."

SB 168478 Sergt. B. Carrier,
R.H.Q. 2RCHA,
Fort Osborne Barracks,
Winnipeg, Man., Canada.

I have been reading the WIDE WORLD for a little over a year; a Scot I met in Korea supplied me with a copy every month in exchange for some Canadian magazines. I first met him—and the W.W.B.—in a K.O.S.B. dug-out not far from the Panmunjom beacon. The Scots took over from the Canadian "Van Doos," and at last I got some tea, some fine steak-and-kidney puddings, and some good English conversation.

On the wall of the dug-out I noticed a hand-painted W.W.B. badge, and sundry questions enlightened me as to the Brotherhood. I decided, however, that it was not for me. While I am adventurous, and have an "itching foot," the Army has long kept me tied to the prairies; I yearned for a wider field. My sagacious Scottish friend pointed out that my travels at week-ends and on leave ought to fill the bill. I have often ridden through the Canadian bush and made lengthy canoe-trips on the rivers, and I always hitch-hike the two thousand miles from Army camp to home on my annual leaves. All the same, I have never encountered adventure with a capital A. My greatest thrill comes from meeting

The Wide World Brotherhood is a fraternity of men (and women) of goodwill, linked by the common bond of a love of travel and adventure. It has only one rule—a solemn pledge to treat fellow-members as brothers and, if need arises, give them any help possible. There is no annual subscription; the only necessary expense is 3s. (U.S. 42c.) for the gilt-and-enamel buttonhole badge (brooch for ladies) and certificate of membership. The badge should be worn regularly to enable Brethren to recognize one another. Through the "Pen-Friends" section W.W.B.s can communicate with Brothers of similar interests in every corner of the earth.

Although only four years old, the Brotherhood is represented in over seventy different countries and is continually increasing its strength. Why not join this great society and be assured of finding good comrades wherever you go?

new people, making new friends, and exploring new country....

Last week I saw for myself just how the W.W.B. works, and because of this I now ask your permission to join the Brotherhood; the seed originally planted in my mind by a Scots soldier in the

Korean hills has eventually germinated!

I was at the Winnipeg railway station, awaiting the arrival of a relative, when I noticed a party of twenty or more people, laden with luggage, looking around them in that undecided fashion indicative of strangers in a strange land. Representatives of the Travellers' Aid and Red Cross organizations were moving about among them, but I made up my mind to see if I could be of any assistance. One of the menfolk observed me approaching, and came forward to meet me. Suddenly he glanced at another man, who evidently entertained the same idea as myself, and, with a polite apology, turned aside and shook hands with the stranger. After a few words of introduction both men explained to me that they were members of the W.W.B.; the Englishman touched his tie and the Canadian fingered his lapel, where I saw a reproduction of the crest I had seen in the Korean dug-out.

I stayed with them for a while, helping to move baggage, and thus made the acquaintance of two good fellows who had become friends through the magical power of a little symbol. Obviously the hand of friendship, when extended, is more gladly grasped when the W.W.B. emblem acts as a link!

I am not joining the fraternity merely because I want to help immigrants at the local railway depôt, but because I am convinced there is a great deal of kindness in one's fellow-men, only waiting to be released by the

APPLICATION FORM

To the WIDE WORLD BROTHERHOOD, Tower House, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2.
I wish to join the Brotherhood, and enclose herewith 3s. od. (Canada 40c.) for Buttonhole Badge and Certificate of Membership.

(Block Letters, please.)

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The following articles are available to Brethren only, post free to any part of the world. *Quote your official number when ordering.*

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W.W.B. SEALS.—Miniatures of badge in gold and colours with gummed backs. For use on envelopes or to convert ordinary notepaper into "official" stationery. Ideal for authenticating "Pen-Friend" or W.W.B. Club letters. Price 3s. per 100 (U.S.A. 42 cents).

W.W.B. MOTOR-CAR TRANSFER.—3in. reproduction of badge, in gold and colours, for windscreen or window of car. Price 1s. (U.S.A. 14 cents) with instructions for fixing.

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influence of organizations such as the Brotherhood. If I can add to that store of comradeship during my forthcoming tour of duty in Germany (with leaves spent in England and Scotland) or in any other part of the world to which I may be sent, I shall be well content.

I have written to my Scots friend (now in Greenock) telling him of my decision and sending him a copy of the Magazine he missed. By an odd chance I came across it in one of the book-stores in Winnipeg."

THE WORLD-TRAVELLER

Another cheery letter comes from Brother Billy ("Cyclist") Saaiman, who has pedalled countless thousands of miles in various parts of the world. Writing from 1830, Alberni Street, Vancouver, Zone 5, British Columbia, Canada, he tells us: "I gave up pedal-cycling in December last and bought a small B.S.A. Bantam motor-cycle. Now I am giving lectures to schools on my African adventures; so far I have visited a hundred and seventy-five, and have ridden right across Canada from Montreal to Vancouver. In order to stay longer than I originally intended I had to take out immigration-papers. Now I am preparing for another big tour—to start early in 1954—through the United States and Mexico and thence as far as the Panama Canal.

During the season I worked as an assistant cook on the C.P.R., covering a big mileage and meeting many W.W.B.s from Europe and the U.S.A. I have found the Brethren from Britain, South Africa, and the U.S. particularly friendly; directly they spot the badge they are eager to shake hands!

I should be pleased to hear from any Brothers who would care to accompany me on

my forthcoming tour, during which my machine will carry a big W.W.B. emblem."

We wish Brother Saaiman the best of luck on his ambitious journey, and hope that W.W.B.s along the route will keep their eyes open for this indefatigable world-wanderer.

"PEN-FRIENDS" TAKE NOTE

We are reluctantly compelled to announce that, for the present, we cannot accept any more names for inclusion in "Pen-Friends" until we have worked off the accumulation already in type. New members, meanwhile, can "get busy" by writing to suitable correspondents in the lists published month by month. A few readers Overseas, obviously unfamiliar with the position, have taken us to task for our failure to print their names. It should be distinctly understood that we do not bind ourselves to insert names in "Pen-Friends" within a definite period; such publication depends upon the pressure on available space and, in any case, is a privilege, not a right. The vast majority of W.W.B.s will readily understand that it is impossible to allot unlimited pages to names, and are content to await their turn. People who make a grievance out of the unavoidable delay are just as unreasonable as those who, finding themselves overwhelmed with letters, write despairingly: "I cannot possibly reply to them all. Please put a notice in your next issue asking members not to send any more!"

BROTHERHOOD CLUBS

Great activity continues along the Club front, and Hon. Secs. in various parts of the world report gratifying progress, although much hard work is sometimes needed to stimulate the laggards, who never seem to realize how sorely

their apathy taxes the patience and enthusiasm of more-energetic members. The following Brethren are now endeavouring to form new Clubs, and will be glad to hear from interested local W.W.B.s.

DENTON, Manchester.—Mr. K. H. Thorp, 141, Corporation Rd., Denton, Manchester.

HARWICH, Essex.—Mr. A. C. Bradburn, 45, West St., Harwich, Essex.

KENTON, Newcastle-on-Tyne.—Mr. B. F. Warner, 49, Millfield Avenue, Montague Estate, Kenton, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

LEEDS, Yorks.—Mr. Brodie McGreal and Miss Mary Kelly, 101, Cardigan Mount, Kirkstall Rd., Leeds, 4.

MONTREAL, Canada.—Mr. A. J. Madore, 2380, Coursol St., Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

NDOLA, Northern Rhodesia.—Miss Margaret D. Holt, P.O. Box 402, Ndola, Northern Rhodesia.

NORTH DURHAM.—Mr. Thos. Cave, 4, North St., Newbottle, Houghton-le-Spring, Co. Durham.

POONA, India.—Mr. K. D. Sonawane, 613, Shamiwar Dich, Poona, 2, India.

ROSETTENVILLE, South Africa.—Mr. P. M. Henry, 2, Capessa Court, 7, Kruger St., Rosettenville, Johannesburg, Transvaal, South Africa.

SUEZ CANAL ZONE.—Mr. G. S. Eiuetheriadas, c/o H.Q., C.R.A.S.C. Suez and Pet. Group, M.E.I.F., 16.

WARRINGTON, Lancs.—Mr. J. J. Urey, 19, Gough Avenue, Langford, Warrington, Lancs.

HITCH-HIKING IN IRELAND

Brother Jack Moore, of 26, Nephin Road, Dublin, Ireland, sends us the portrait above and an account of a six-hundred-mile hitch-hike in the West of Ireland. "I went alone, travelling in almost every kind of conveyance except an aeroplane, and also on foot. My first trip was from Dublin to Galway, which I reached more quickly than by train. Thence I went out to the Aran Islands in the mail steamer. I meant to camp there for a couple of days, but found that the steamer would not be calling again for about a week. I therefore had a good look round Inismore, the largest of the islands, and then left, determined to return later. There is a trade between Connemara and Aran in turf (peat), brought to the islands by picturesque little brown-sailed 'turf-hookers,' which can be

seen during the summer tied up at Kilronan and Kilmurvey piers on Inismore. I decided that, after touring Connemara, I would go back to Aran in one of these craft. The following morning saw me on the road again through the beautiful country of West Connaught

—wonderful mountain and lake scenery. I went north into the wild and lonely valley of Maam, where I camped beside the river under the shadow of the towering Maamturk Mountains to the south and the highlands of the Joyce country to the north. The next few days were spent travelling and tramping through the glorious area round Killary Harbour. Incidentally there are only two *real* fords in Ireland, and this is one of them; the other is Carlingford Lough, in County Down.

"On the Saturday night I reached Carraroe, South Connemara, from which place turf-boats sail to Aran. Embarking on the Monday, I sailed across

the North Sound to Kilronan, Aran. This was a most enjoyable experience! The 'hookers' are very sturdily built, probably of oak, and are cutter-rigged, with big brown sails. I spent two days on Aran, during which time it hardly ceased raining! I loved the islands even in the rain, and should have stayed longer had the weather been finer.

"Returning to the mainland by steamer, I headed south to Clare and Kilkee, and then started homewards towards Dublin, reaching it in four 'lifts'—one of them all the way from Limerick! Next year I hope to hitch-hike across the United States *en route* to Australia!"

ODDMENTS

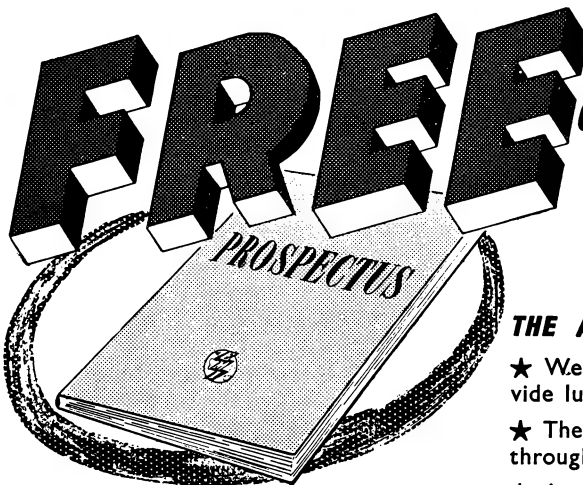
The Glasgow W.W.B. Club recently entertained thirteen W.W.B.s from Germany and showed them round the city. Everybody had a thoroughly good time, and the visitors invited the Glaswegians to come to Germany next year.

Brother D. E. C. Murray, c/o the Audiophone Co., 69, St. George's Terrace, Perth, West Australia, offers advice on emigration to prospective settlers from Britain. He is himself a recent arrival.

Brother D. R. Rhodes, 63, Waterloo Road, Blackpool, Lancs, offers to entertain Overseas W.W.B.s visiting Britain if they will let him know of their arrival well in advance.

Brother A. D. Broughton, c/o Chesson's Cape Breweries, Ltd., P.O. Box 12, Claremont, South Africa, collects beer-bottle labels from all over the world, and would like to hear from others interested.





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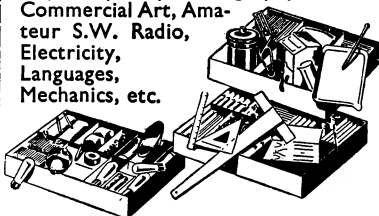
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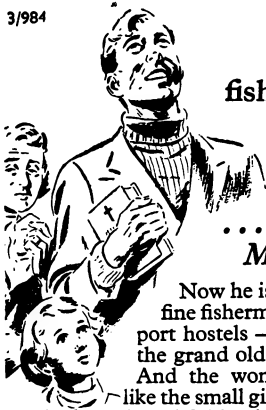
MISCELLANEOUS

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| 34077 | BRADY, F., 69, Marlborough Road, Chingford, London, E.4. (General.) |
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| 34073 | BROWN, J., NA/1, Mess 21, H.M.S. "Glory," c/o G.P.O. London. (General.) |
| 34930 | BUCKE, N., H.M.T.S. "Monarch," c/o G.P.O., London. (Photography and Books.) |
| 34316 | BUTT, R., A.C.2 (age 18), Flight Planning, R.A.F. Changi, Singapore, 17, Malaya. (Scouting and Sport.) |
| 24310 | CHAMBERS, J. W., St. Andrew's Rectory, Great Billing, Northants. (General.) |
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| 34088 | COBLEY, J. R., Royal Canadian Mounted Police, "A" Division, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. (Stamps and Hunting.) |
| 34151 | COOPER, G. A., Killyleagh Street, Crossgar, Co. Down, N. Ireland. (General.) |
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| 34496 | DEAN, S. T., 34, Century Road, Walthamstow, London, E.17. (General.) |
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| 34342 | DOWD (Mrs.), J. (age 23), 73, Trees Road, Mount Merrion, Dublin, Eire. (General.) |
| 23714 | DRAPER, J. M., L.E.M. (age 22), P/S.MX. 660815, Submarine Spare Crew, 49 Mess, Fort Blockhouse, Gosport, Hampshire. (General.) |
| 30871 | DUNNING, J. R. (age 26), 57 Coronation Road, Walsall-Wood, nr. Walsall, Staffordshire. (General.) |
| 34186 | EMERY-CROSBY, W., Labi Road Project, Sarawak Oilfields Ltd., Seria, Brunei, N. Borneo. (Travel and Foreign Currencies.) |

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| 33178 | EVANS, H. C., 37, Dean Crescent, Hamilton, Lanarkshire, Scotland. (Stamps.) |
| 26706 | EVASON, A. K., 50, James Street, Tredegar, Monmouth, Wales. (General.) |
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| 34802 | FELLOWS, B., The Caravan, Shelton Farm, Bicton Heath, Shrewsbury, Shropshire. (Sport and Music.) |
| 34331 | FENN, A., 47, Alfred Street, Parkside, S. Australia. (Stamps.) |
| 34540 | FERNANDES, A., 2nd Floor, Room 32, Saint Paul Street, Dadar, Bombay, India. (General.) |
| 33518 | FRASER, A. B., Mountain Road, Pomona, North Coast Line, Queensland, Australia. (Stamps.) |
| 34128 | FREDERICKS, M. R. (age 38), Post Office, Wetton, Cape, South Africa. (General.) |
| 33065 | FREEMAN, L. (Miss), 30, Belmore Road, Lorn, Maitland, N.S.W., Australia. (General—preferably U.S.A., Canada, and British Commonwealth.) |
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| 34051 | GRAHAM, D., "Woodpeckers," St. John's Road, Colchester, Essex. (Shooting and Photography.) |
| 33541 | GRAY, L.-Cpl., 4040186, Main Guardroom, R.A.F. Padgate, nr. Warrington, Lancashire. (General.) |
| 34934 | GRIESSEL, D., Diamond Drilling Co., Kansanshi Mine, P.O. Solwezi, Northern Rhodesia. (Correspondence in Dutch, German, Flemish and Afrikaans.) |
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| 34532 | HARDER, A. G., 209 North 9th, Fairview, Oklahoma, U.S.A. (Geography.) |
| 31910 | HARMER, V. F., "Broadlands," Moat Lane, Sedlescombe, nr. Battle, Sussex. (Natural History and Travel.) |
| 32261 | HASSAN, Saller Bin, c/o Immigration Office, Alor Star, Kedah, North Malaya. (Detective and Western Story Books.) |

3/984



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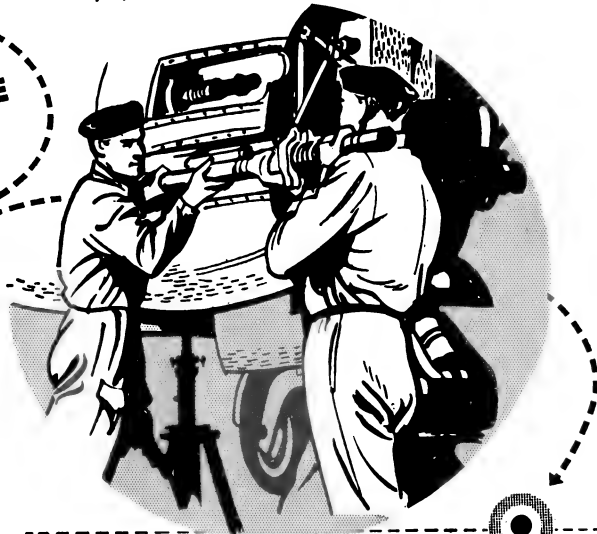
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Limitations

Complacency is a grave failing, and particularly so in the case of a scribe whose task is to please his public. Should I ever feel tempted to indulge myself in this direction, however, some critical correspondent would soon jolt me back to a proper sense of humility, as witness the following: "Your notes are both interesting and informative," writes a reader, "but they suffer from a grave fault. You catalogue the merits of various new products, but you never point out their weaknesses and drawbacks." If I were to do that, K. F. C., I should have to devote quite a lot of space to every item. Attempts to weigh up its advantages against its "drawbacks" would not only tend to confuse people, but, in many cases, might expose me to the charge of claiming expert technical knowledge which I do not actually possess. You can take it for granted that if I dis-

cover obvious defects in a contrivance, I don't mention it favourably in these columns! Often, of course, a product does not reveal flaws in design, material, or performance until it has been in use for some time, which adds yet more complications to the position. All I can hope to do within the limits of this feature is to describe how things strike me after inspection and trial, leaving the rest to the reader's own good sense.

Belts for Men

One of the chief subjects of interest to my older correspondents at the present time seems to be that hardy perennial — figure-control. Should a man endeavour to preserve a trim waistline, or shouldn't he? We seem to have got away from the alleged "effeminacy" of belts, for few readers now mention that aspect; what they want to know, mainly, is whether a belt is really efficacious in getting rid of "middle-age

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spread" and giving protection and support to weakened abdominal muscles. Speaking with a good deal of experience of belts of all kinds, I should say that the answer is an emphatic "Yes."

The Danger-line

Nature undoubtedly intended man to be narrow-hipped and flat-stomached, with tough, resilient muscles controlling the vital organs and guarding them against displacement and injury. Healthy youngsters are still built that way, of course; but modern conditions and sedentary occupations make it exceedingly difficult to preserve one's figure as one grows older. Some men abandon all attempts in this direction, frankly

declaring that they are more concerned with comfort than elegance. This is sensible enough up to a point; one doesn't expect the fellow of forty and onwards to exhibit the slim outlines of twenty-five! But when that "corporation," "bulge," or "bow-window"—call it what you like—begins to assume noticeable proportions, handicapping its owner's former activities and tempting him to sit around instead of taking much-needed exercise, then the middle-aged man is approaching the danger-point!

"Prevention is Better than Cure"

A vanished waistline and a prominent "corporation" not only spoil one's appearance, but are actually a menace to health. There is increased strain on the abdominal wall and its controlling muscles, important organs are liable to get out of position, and the risk of rupture is ever present. It is an excellent plan, on the "Prevention is better than cure" basis, to take to a simple form of belt while one still possesses a decent figure; its mere presence persuades one not to adopt ungainly postures, while the gentle massaging effect it exercises tends to discourage the formation of unwanted fat.

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range but, up to the present, have never succeeded in achieving. Now is your chance—if you've the strength of mind to settle to the job! Whatever you have in mind, you will be well advised to work out the details well in advance, so that unforeseen difficulties, developing at the last moment, don't spoil the whole show.

These reflections occur to me after studying some very interesting literature issued by an enterprising firm which specialises in providing motor-cruisers and other craft for summer pleasure-cruising in a favourite old stamping-ground of my own—the Norfolk Broads. If you've never been there, you have missed a memorable experience; if you *have*, you'll certainly be longing to go again. The firm in question have boats to suit all requirements, and make things easy even for the man who has never gone cruising before. On the two hundred miles of peaceful Broadland rivers and reed-fringed lakes one can have a most enjoyable and health-giving holiday, far from the fret and bustle of conventional resorts, but I emphasize the fact that it is necessary to fix up the hiring of your boat, and sundry other matters, well in advance, otherwise you may find considerable difficulty in obtaining the sort of craft you need.

Your Shaving Brush

Here is a little "economy tip" sent by a Suffolk correspondent. "As everybody knows, good shaving

brushes are increasingly expensive, and therefore it is well worth while trying to make them last as long as possible. Observation has shown me that most men, after a shave, leave the wet brush standing upright. This not only prevents it drying out properly, but the water soaks down into the adhesive binding the roots of the bristles, sets up rot, makes the brush smell, and appreciably shortens its life. The remedy is to suspend the brush bristles down, which is quite easily done by hanging it from a cord or elastic band fixed at some convenient point. I have had my present brush for fifteen years."

For the Sportsman

The latest invention that has come my way will be of considerable interest to sportsmen, for it looks like superseding the traditional shooting-stick with the myriads of folk who require an occasional seat outdoors. This latest arrival is indeed an ingenious device! Closed, it looks just as handy and inconspicuous as the old shooting-stick, and weighs only about 2½ lb. When opened, however, it reveals striking improvements. Tripod legs rest firmly on the ground, a comfortable little seat offers welcome relaxation to weary limbs, and there is actually a back-support! No balancing is needed, owing to the tripod base, and the whole thing is very strongly made, being of duralumin tubular construction, with all steel parts plated and reinforced rubber ferrules. This

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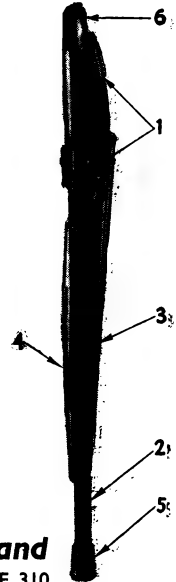
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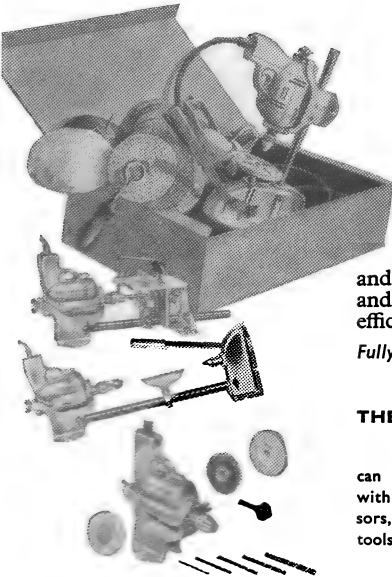
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Man and His 'Baccy-Pouch

Contrary to masculine belief, women have no monopoly of illogicality. Has it ever occurred to you to study the ways of the male in connection with his tobacco-pouch? Several men of my acquaintance, although very careful about their expenditure in other directions, seem to "let themselves go" when it comes to costly pouches, seeking the softest and rarest of leathers and the most up-to-date shapes. You'd be surprised, by the way, to know how much one can pay for a pouch,

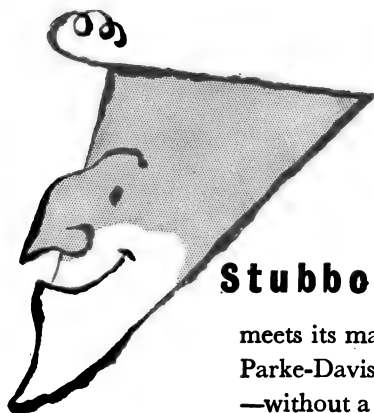
especially if you comb the West End for something extra-special! By way of contrast, I know one gentleman, a very wealthy person indeed, who carefully fills his pipe from a circular metal box reminiscent of the tin affair favoured by the old-time "navvy." Close examination of this particular container, however, discloses the fact that it is of solid silver, of great antiquity, and bears an elaborate crest.

Eccentricity

On the other hand, many men use the shabbiest old pouches, sadly frayed and torn, and there used to be a broker on the London Stock Exchange who habitually carried his 'baccy in a battered tin bearing the name of another mixture altogether—and a much better brand at that! On one occasion, I recall, I went fishing with a queer old fellow who kept his tobacco loose in the left-hand pocket of his sports-jacket! Even the occasional explosion of a stray match-head, or the flaring of a strand of wool, never appeared to trouble him! These eccentricities are all the more unaccountable because every pipe-smoker knows that, to give the best results, tobacco *must* be kept in such a way that moisture is retained, extremes of temperature avoided, and dust and other foreign matter rigidly excluded.

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mixture in an imposing-looking jar or "humidor," with a slice of raw potato in the top (renewed at intervals) to prevent it becoming too dry, and perhaps a few "Tonquin beans" nestling in the 'baccy to give extra fragrance. All this sort of thing, however, is now extinct; nobody seems to have the time, let alone the money, for such elaborate rituals. Most of us are mainly concerned with making that horridly-expensive ounce in the old pouch last as long as possible!

The Rivals

History has a way of repeating itself in small matters as well as great. When the safety-razor became a practical proposition, tempting more and more shavers to abandon the regulation "cut-throat," the scandalised devotees of the latter—the fortunate fellows who had become skilled in its use and maintenance—rallied eagerly to the defence of their old friend. The new-fangled invention, they declared, was a mere toy, unworthy the attention of real *men*! It shaved neither so fast nor so smooth as the well-tried implement it was intended to supersede, was difficult to clean, and required constant expenditure for new blades which, in turn, were never so keen as a properly-stropped "cut-throat." To-day, of course, apart from a minority of stalwart veterans—slowly diminishing, I suspect—the hollow-ground razor has had its day. Let me say at once, however,

that, in the hands of a master, it *does* give wonderful results, while its working life seems endless. The main drawback about the "cut-throat" is the fact that it calls for considerable skill in usage and a certain amount of "know-how" in maintaining a perfect edge. The modern young man, seemingly, hasn't time or inclination to acquire the necessary technique, and so the "safety" has conquered the shaving world.

"Safety" Champions

Now that the latter, in turn, is menaced by the electric dry-shaver, users of "safeties," like their "straight" razor predecessors, are taking up the cudgels on behalf of their favourites.

The champions of the safety, in fact, put up quite as good a case as their fathers did for the "cut-throat," and are, of course, fully entitled to their opinion. Nevertheless, I believe the electric dry-shaver has come to stay, though its price is certainly against its adoption by everybody; the "safety," which has actually become cheaper as its efficiency improves, scores heavily in this direction.

A New Technique

The earliest dry-shavers were certainly not very satisfactory, being experiments in a new field, but every subsequent model showed an advance, and when (very suspiciously) I tried them one by one I gradually came to realise that, some fine day, they might actually be the means

tie up to Van Heusen O

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of providing Man with his ideal shave—velvety, effortless, and completely bloodless. Latterly the pace has hotted up, so to speak; the latest models reveal vastly-increased efficiency. Not all the people who use dry-shavers, of course, are completely satisfied with the results achieved, but judging from my own experience I suspect this to be largely their own fault. As I have pointed out on previous occasions, one needs to develop an entirely new technique, throwing overboard the methods used in "ordinary" shaving. This calls for the expenditure of a certain amount of time and patience, but if you are prepared to teach yourself it won't be very long before you become a dry-shaver

enthusiast. My own initial efforts were so disappointing that I eventually decided the responsibility lay with *me*; no sensible manufacturer, I reasoned, would attempt to sell the public a high-priced article which couldn't do better than *that*!

Secrets of Success

Thereupon I set to work to acquire the essential technique, and within a fortnight I was getting first-class shaves! The secret of success, I think, lies in gentle stretching of the skin, holding the shaver at right angles to the face and maintaining a firm pressure, and always working "against the grain" of the bristles. For the first few days you may find flaky particles of calloused skin—the product, I am told, of years of "ordinary" shaving — coming away, but when this phenomenon ceases your face should be rejuvenated. It will never again become sore or chafed, nor is there the slightest risk of cutting or "nicking" yourself! These early shaves will *not* be quick ones, in all probability, and some of them may be disappointing, but after you have got the "hang" of the business you will be surprised at the smoothness you can achieve in a minimum of time. To sum up: Success with a good dry-shaver of any well-known make depends largely upon the user; the machine is capable of doing the job properly if you handle it correctly.

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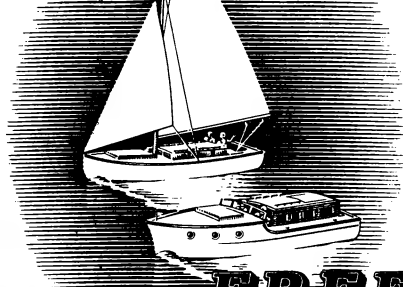
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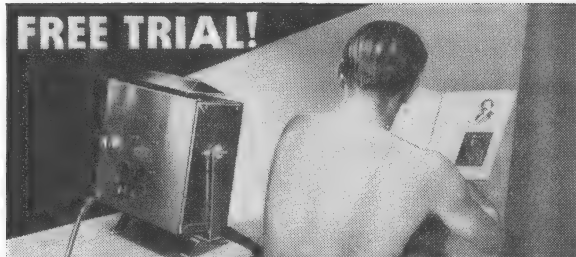
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reader, visiting London, decided to treat himself to a new hat, and sends me the following notes on his experience. "I found the hatter to be a most knowledgeable individual, and his running commentary on headgear in general and my own in particular proved decidedly interesting. He informed me, by way of a start, that the function of my hat was not merely to protect my head but also to set off my face and enhance my personality. That being the case, a sensible man would naturally devote a little care to its selection."

Brushing

"The 'pork pie' style, I learnt, would not suit me; I needed a soft felt with a straight dent. 'And remember,' he added severely, 'never to put it on, take it off, or raise it to a lady by grabbing the front part of the dent! That creates undue wear and spoils the appearance of the hat.' Brushing, I learnt, must be done regularly, the dent being carefully pushed out for this purpose. Many men forget this latter detail, with the result that the depression gets into very bad condition — almost mossy with neglect! 'You'll spot what I mean if you look at the hats of some of your friends.'

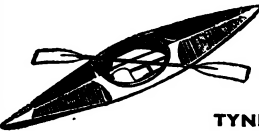
"My mentor confirmed my impression that the bowler is really coming back into favour — 'a very smart and economical hat; most becoming to certain types!' But it isn't good form to wear it at a rakish angle or on the back of




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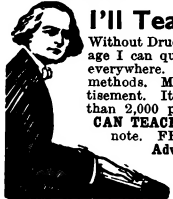


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one's head; the proper position is dead straight. The latter was so enthusiastic, so genuinely absorbed in his subject, that I hadn't the heart to mention the existence of individuals so lost to a sense of decency that they habitually go bare-headed!"

You Could Do This!

About a year ago I was instrumental in starting quite a lot of householders off on the (I hope) pleasant task of beautifying their homes — and incidentally making them easier to keep clean — by fixing special plastic tiles in such places as bathrooms, kitchens, round scullery sinks, pantry shelves, etc., etc. These tiles have since become popular all over the country. No special tools are required for fixing; they can be cut with ordinary scissors, and bent with the fingers to fit corners and curves. Formerly an adhesive had to be applied to fix them on the wall or shelf, but now the makers have added the final touch; the adhesive is on the back, ready for use! The tiles measure six inches by six, are available in several charming pastel colours (also black and white), and can be cleaned in the twinkling of an eye. They are obtainable from most stores and ironmongers, and the makers will be glad to send you an illustrated brochure on receipt of 2½d. stamp. Many a husband has acquired an enviable reputation as a really gifted handyman after successfully tackling a job with these excellent tiles!

Night-Driving Terrors

Many a motorist, if in a confidential mood, would admit that he secretly dreads driving at night or in fog; headlight-glare is also a perpetual bugbear. A veteran driver has called my attention to some remarkable glasses which reduce these terrors to an absolute minimum. "Luminous" yellow lenses render objects clearly discernible, even on the darkest night, and even make powerful headlights endurable. Wide arms prevent side-glare; the frames are particularly robust and the eye-pieces extra-large. If you are conscious of fatigue and optical strain when driving, these specially - designed spectacles are well worth attention. The price is 15s. 6d.

Improvement in Socks

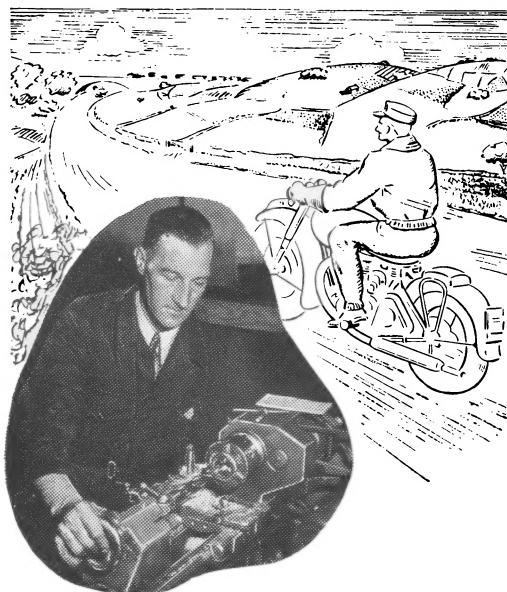
Some manufacturers are showing commendable enterprise in devising socks which "stay up" of themselves. Liberally spliced at heels and toes with tough nylon yarn, these socks wear remarkably well and don't shrink in the wash. Men who cherish the idea that suspenders tend to cause varicose veins will certainly welcome self-supporting socks.

The Captain

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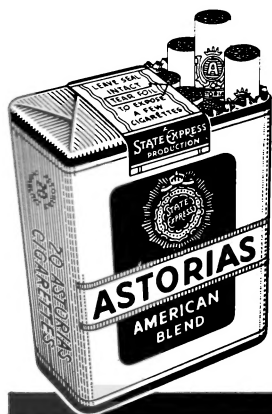
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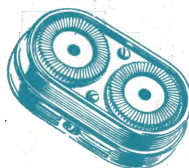
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The Philishave fits snugly into your hand. You can turn it about at all angles to suit the curves of your face.

4 Gentle skin s-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-r

The rim of the BI-AX Shaving Head is slightly raised. It gently stretches the skin so that hairs are exposed for closer shaving.

5 Easy to clean

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